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A Cross-Case Analysis of Middle School Reading Teachers' Theoretical Orientations as They Relate to Classroom Practices.

Shirley Theriot Fogleman

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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**A CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL READING TEACHERS'
THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS AS THEY RELATE TO
CLASSROOM PRACTICES**

A Dissertation

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

in

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

by

**Shirley Theriot Fogleman
B.S., University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1971
M. ED., University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1990
May 1995**

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my children,

Rob and Erin Fogleman,
for their love and constant patience;

to my parents,
Rita Bernis Theriot and Willis J. Theriot,
who taught me to dream "Big Dreams"

to my adopted family,
The Lagneaux's,
for their constant prayers and support;

and last, but not least,
to my dear friend,
Parrie Lagneaux
for her continued help and encouragement.

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To all the friends and family members who have given me a word of support and encouragement during these past few years, I give a heartfelt, Thank you. I would also like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Earl Cheek, who was wonderful and truly an asset to our educational community. His guidance was consistant and he did this with kindness and patience. I will always be grateful for his nurturing and support. I would like to thank Dr. Janice Stulhmann for always sharing her expertise, wisdom, and time. Her sincere thoughts about my work always gave me the courage to continue working. Also, I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. William Pinar and Dr. Mary Gary for their words of encouragement and support. Dr. Gary Rice's encouraging and comforting words during my time of crisis will always be remembered.

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Most of all to God who sustained me.

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ABSTRACT

Each interaction between teachers and students is a reflection of the theory that these professionals, sometimes unknowingly, posit about what should be occurring in their classrooms. The purpose of this study is to explore the differences between middle school language arts teachers' beliefs about how children actually read a text, and how these teachers translate these beliefs into classroom practices. The beliefs we hold about reading comprehension are essential to our understanding about how we should instruct and assess our students in our classes.

Leu and Kinzer (1988) refer to two beliefs' frameworks of comprehension in reading, based on the assumption that effective reading teachers know what to do as well as why they choose a particular practice. These beliefs' instruments determined categories of the middle school reading teachers which suggested philosophical and instructional differences. I randomly selected teachers from the nine categories created by the responses from these two beliefs' instruments. Using three types of data; i.e., survey, interview, and classroom observations, common themes between participants' beliefs and practices emerged. The criteria of the unified language acquisition group consists of characteristics of both the mastery of specific skills and the integrated language acquisition category possibly explaining the numerous consistencies of this

groups. Mastery of specific skills and integrated language acquisition participants displayed numerous inconsistencies in their stated beliefs and their demonstrated practices.

CHAPTER I

A SHIFT IN PHILOSOPHY

Teaching language arts in a rural middle school, I employed the basal and its many ancillary materials, using these supplementary materials if I had extra time. Extra class time was a luxury I rarely enjoyed. I rather delighted in the detailed plans and the predictable lessons. I felt very safe and as Cherland (1989) has suggested, in charge, the ideal teacher, bright, efficient, concerned, and hard working. My teaching consisted of following published plans. My students were industrious, as they mastered each skill, motivated by the grades they received each grading period. High grades were important to my students and to their parents.

I made clear what was expected of them and they gave it to me. My students were chosen to participate in our district's Bilingual Program and were, for the most part, our most capable students. The Bilingual Program consisted of French as part of a two-hour block with language arts. My foreign language training and subsequent later teaching was more process oriented; we did lots of talking and role playing. However, in order to meet the curricular demands, I was unable to teach this way in my language arts classes. I had to teach language skills with the language basal and

reading skills with the reading basal, just as my colleagues were doing.

My philosophy of teaching shifted from skills-based to integrated language arts approximately four years ago when I became one of eight pilot teachers in our district's attempt to implement a whole-language philosophy in the middle schools. The intent of this new program was to introduce a philosophy that would empower teachers, (Goodman, 1986) who would facilitate students as they became empowered, literate adults. With mixed feelings I accepted the challenge, wondering if this new method would be just like the many others we were forced to try. I began reading books which were given to each of us (Atwell, 1987; Manning & Manning, 1990) and attending workshops on this "new theory" of teaching children how to improve their writing and reading.

In the process of learning about whole language, I also became informed about other philosophies of teaching language arts. "As a result of my research, I discovered that my past teaching was not a reflection of my own pedagogical beliefs or my observations of my students, but an adaptation of the beliefs of the "experts." As Routman (1991) suggest workshops were not enough. The pilot teachers had to do the professional reading and reflect on their own teaching. Eventually, we began to understand not only whole language, but other philosophies as well.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study attempts to clarify the relationship between a teacher's understanding of how reading takes place and how this belief is translated to actual classroom practice and to resolve how the understanding of this relationship can be used in subsequent teacher inservices and teacher education. The rationale for this study emanates from my experiences of the past four years. I investigated the differences between middle school language arts teachers' beliefs about how children actually read a text, how these teachers translate these beliefs into classroom practices, and, finally, their complex stories told through their own voices. The beliefs we hold about reading comprehension are essential to our literacy framework (Leu & Kinzer, 1995) or our beliefs about how we should instruct and assess our students in our classes.

The strength of a person's philosophy and how they translate this philosophy into practice is dependent upon a number of things: "...individual's life experiences, observations of students, interactions with colleagues, professional reading, knowledge, and interpretation of the research and understanding of language learning" (Routman, 1991, p. 12). Many "published descriptions of reading practices" differ from research recommendations (Goodlad, 1984; Smith & Feathers, 1983).

Many middle school reading teachers express their beliefs about how reading should be taught, yet they feel they must teach according to others' beliefs; i.e., publishers and those professionals who write for publishers. An uncomfortable relationship between our personal philosophy and our pedagogical practice is often created by the instructional materials purchased and the dictates to utilize these materials by the district and parent groups. When asked about these dictates, a representative from our local school board commented that the dictates are "assumptions and not expectations." However, in speaking with a colleague, who teaches fifth grade, I was informed that the basis for promotion, at that grade level, is dictated by a central office criteria list. One of the criteria, as stated by this teacher, is completion of the basal adopted by the district.

In a survey of middle school practices, Binko and Lawler (1986) report that the majority of those in his survey reported that they were guided by a holistic philosophy, but gave high priority to basics, with least priority to interdisciplinary team-teaching. Interdisciplinary team-teaching is a major tenet of the concept of exemplary middle schools (Allington, 1990).

The three philosophies I investigated are mastery of specific skills, the interactive philosophy (referred to in this study as unified language acquisition), and integrated

language acquisition. Mastery of specific skills is based on the assumption that students master a predetermined set of reading skills under the explicit direction of a teacher, thus encouraging deductive thinking. Integrated language acquisition is based on the belief that reading ability develops in meaningful, functional, and holistic experiences with print in an implicit and inductive manner. The interactive philosophy, which will be referred to as "unified reading acquisition," assumes that reading develops differently depending on the ability of the students.

Leu and Kinzer (1995) refer to two beliefs' frameworks of comprehension in reading, based on the assumption that effective reading teachers know what to do, as well as, why they choose a particular practice. I decided to employ the Leu and Kinzer (1988) beliefs' instrument to determine categories of middle school reading teachers' beliefs. After administering this instrument to eighty-six regular language arts teachers in the school district, I established categories based on the responses of the two sets of fifteen statements. The first set of statements (how reading takes place) determined the reader-based, interactive, and text-based categories. The second set of statements determined the integrated language acquisition, unified language acquisition, and the mastery of specific skills categories. Categories that were created were:

- (1) Reader-Based/Integrated Language Acquisition;
- (2) Interactive/Integrated Language Acquisition;
- (3) Text-Based/Integrated Language Acquisition;
- (4) Reader-Based/Unified Language Acquisition;
- (5) Interactive/Unified Language Acquisition;
- (6) Text-Based/Unified Language Acquisition;
- (7) Reader-Based/Mastery of Specific Skills;
- (8) Interactive/Mastery of Specific Skills;
- (9) Text-Based/Mastery of Specific Skills.

I randomly selected teachers from each category who I interviewed and later observed in their classrooms. I also interviewed a student for each class chosen by the individual teacher. Through the use of interviews and observations, I discovered common threads which arose to compare and contrast beliefs and practices using a multiple-case study design.

Significance of the Study

Harste and Burke (1977) state that, "Teachers are theoretical in their instructional approach to reading" (p. 32). Rupley and Logan (1984) support this claim as they conclude that elementary teachers' beliefs about reading do influence their instructional decision-making. The significance of this study is the resolution of the consistencies and inconsistencies between the participants' beliefs about how their students read a text and their actual classroom practice.

When citing inconsistencies between beliefs and practices, (Kinzer, 1988; Duffy & Anderson, 1982; & Wilson, Konopak, & Readence, 1992) researchers suggest that environmental realities of the school and classroom may compel teachers to conform to practices that are done, rather than practices which teachers feel should be done.

My theory of reading comprehension and instruction has evolved along with my understanding of how reading is believed to take place and to develop. In this study, I investigated my participants' understanding of the reading process and their translation of this process into practice, as they demonstrated their decision-making, as well as, the awareness of and the importance they attach to following their beliefs.

Many teachers feel reading should be authentic and natural; however, eighty-five per cent of our language arts classrooms utilize the basal and numerous worksheets which maintain the constant use of mechanical skill and drill. In the past it was thought that reading comprehension could be "caught rather than taught" (Pearson, et al., 1992). However, with the influence of cognitive psychology and linguistics, as well as other fields of research, "catching" subskills is gradually being replaced by "teaching" strategies, and setting up the classroom environment in such a way as to allow students to risk and discover their learning potential.

Pearson, Roehler, Dole, and Duffy (1992) suggest that the continued use of basals, which have encouraged the teaching of skills in U. S. classrooms since the early 1900s, has produced a "simple inertia of tradition." Other causes for practice lagging behind research are the large classes (Dewey, 1902), which face many teachers, and a tendency of parents and school authorities to demand speedy and tangible evidence of progress. Also, inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and what they practice in their classrooms are caused by environmental realities (Davis, Konopak, & Readence, 1993; Duffy & Anderson, 1982; Duffy, Roehler, & Johnson, 1986; Fraatz, 1987; Wilson, Konopak, & Readence, 1991).

Each interaction, between teachers and students is a reflection of the theory that we, as professionals, sometimes unknowingly, hold about what should be occurring in our classrooms. Each time we ask a question or give an assignment, we are demonstrating what we believe is most important about our role as teacher and the ramifications which these beliefs may in turn effect in our classrooms (Warren, 1990).

As a professional of twenty years, I recall planning and executing many lessons, which were thoroughly planned for me by someone who knew nothing about the students I taught. However, I reproduced the process that my own teachers had projected in their classrooms. I must admit,

I knew that the textbook and I were the center of my classroom. However, I've come to realize that subjects should be taught according to how the discipline is structured, then centered around children and how they learn (Watson & Konicek, 1990). Smith (1988) agrees.

What we have in our heads is a theory of what the world is like, a theory that is the basis of all our perceptions and understandings of the world, the root of all learning, the source of all hopes and fears, motives and expectancies, reasoning and creativity. If we can make sense of the world at all, it is by interpreting our interactions with the world in the light of our theory. (p. 7-8)

There are as many reasons for the differences and similarities between what teachers believe and what they practice in their classrooms, as there are teachers. Factors which influence this transfer of belief to actual practice are much broader than tangible classroom interactions. However, several global influences, both political and social, such as the various rights movements; i.e., feminists, African-American, and the handicapped, have also empowered teachers.

Many teachers "seize the moment" and take advantage of this empowerment for themselves as well as for their students. Many others do not. It is important that we, as teachers, reflect on our practices, as Morine-Dersheimer (1987) suggests, "Our theory must be constantly tested and reshaped by our practice, and our practice must be constantly tested and reshaped by our theory" (p. 65).

My own theory development eventually led me to wonder about the subjectivity of others. What were other teachers thinking about their classroom practices and the reasons for doing the things they do? Since many of the teachers were utilizing the basal, I predicted that many of the teachers would ultimately fall into the mastery of skills and text-based category. I also sought to answer the following research questions:

- (1) What common themes arise from the reading theories and practices of teachers who teach reading?
- (2) How do teachers perceive reading theories and translate these theories into practice?
- (3) How do teachers accommodate their own practices and beliefs with the dictates of their school system?

Educational Setting

This study was done in an area which is the center of a diverse culture, including French Acadian descendants and many others who have moved into the area because of the oil and various other industries. This particular school district consists of twenty-three elementary schools, twelve middle schools, and five high schools, all of which total nearly 30,000 students. The population in this district is approximately 165,000, encompasses 283 square miles, and is comprised of five municipalities.

Basic skills are stressed at the K-5 level and reinforced at the middle school level. The district promotes departmentalization and flexible grouping according to needs, interests, and abilities in grades six to twelve.

Summary

In this study I investigated teachers' beliefs using a paper and pencil instrument. After nine categories were created by the eighty-six teachers' responses to the Leu and Kinzer (1988) instrument, I began to examine beliefs and how these beliefs determined classroom practices. Data collected through interviews and observations of the case studies enabled me to search for answers to three research questions (p. 9-10).

As each case study developed through interviews and observations, I was able to compare participants in each category to explore common themes which could explain possible theories about reading. Case studies were conducted at different sites to demonstrate generalizability or diversity (Bogden & Biklin, 1992). Consistencies and inconsistencies were illustrated to project explanations for teachers' beliefs and their ultimate practice in their classrooms.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
Paradigms of Instruction

My concerns for the differences between the personal beliefs about how reading take place and how these beliefs influence our teaching of reading is the reason for my conducting this study. What exactly are the differences in the models of reading and how do these models translate into what we actually do in our classrooms? Are these differences a reflection of the different ways we view reading as a process and how we instruct this process? Is it simply that we choose to overlook a difference in the way we believe reading occurs and to continue teaching as we have been taught? My curiosity for the differences between a high majority of teachers believing in holistic practices and the high percentage, 85% in 1993, of basal usage in the United States (NAEP, 1993) eventually led me to explore other philosophies and models of the reading process. Do teachers follow the obvious structure of the basal because it is consistent with their beliefs or do they teach from the basal, because they feel it is an expectation?

I investigated three philosophies of reading instruction; i.e., integrated language instruction, unified language acquisition, and mastery of specific skills. By

presenting these three philosophies, I will attempt to examine the practices they generate. Kinzer (1988) states:

Efforts in teacher decision making have resulted largely from a feeling that actions stem from either implicitly or explicitly held beliefs or philosophies. It is argued that teacher decisions are, in effect, based on varied and changing data which are filtered through a teacher's philosophical or theoretical orientation, resulting in instructional decisions. In this way, certain methods are chosen while others are ignored, lessons and lesson plans are created, and materials are used, modified, or disregarded.

Teachers' theoretical orientations have been illustrated by my using three models of the reading process (Kinzer, 1988). In this study I replicated the use of these three models are: Goodman's (1985) psycholinguistic-transactional model, which demonstrates a reader-based view in which the reader brings meaning to the text; Rummelhart's (1985) interactive model, which illustrates an interactive view, in which comprehension is achieved by translating the text and the reader's bringing meaning to the text; and finally, Gough's (1985) model, a linear sequence model, which illustrates a text-based view in which comprehension is text-driven. Figure 2.1 which follows illustrates a continuum in which both orientations, reader-based and text-based are at opposite poles and the interactive representing a combination of both is placed in the center. Instructional lessons which reflect the orientations have been placed below each on the continuum.

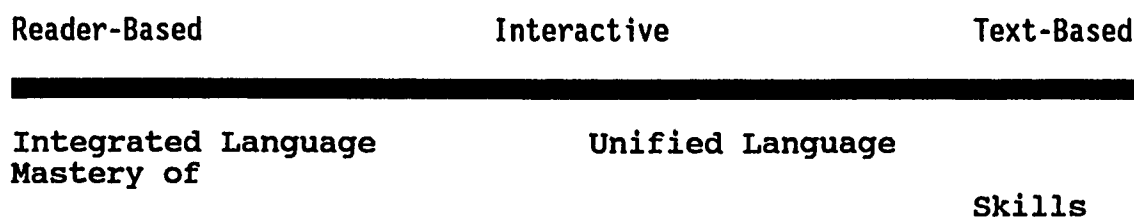


Figure 2.1 A Continuum of Beliefs and Practices

This continuum of beliefs and practices illustrates the span of possible variations of reading processes presented in this study and their consequential instruction. There are many points on this continuum, just as there are many variations of teaching reading, and just as there are many individual teachers.

Differences in reading beliefs and how they should be practiced sometimes cause professionals at national, state, and local levels to become disconcerted. Marie Clay, a process-oriented researcher, and Jeanne Chall, a researcher on the decoding side of the continuum, have waged a continuing debate in professional literature. Reading Research Quarterly (1994) continues this "two sided and feisty debate" (Willinsky, 1994, p. 334). Next, on the state level Vermont, California, and Connecticut are battling the evaluation dichotomy, authentic assessment as opposed to standardized testing and have introduced alternative assessments. Finally, on the local level the school district that is the focus of this study has just endured an emotional battle in which "Back to Basics" groups who are entrenched in various political agendas have attacked whole language, resorting to character

assassinations of local whole language advocates at school board meetings and in the local media. As a result, many whole language teachers who had read the literature and who were attempting many of its strategies were paralyzed with fear of personal attack from speaking out in support of what they believed to be true.

Need for Improved Instruction in the Middle School

Since 1970, middle schools, comprising grades six to eight have rapidly been replacing the traditional junior high, "little high school" (George & Lawrence, 1982, p. 107). This change is designed to meet a need to provide a transition from the comfort and familiarity of the upper elementary grades to the competition and rigor prevalent at the high school level. Younger adolescents experience drastic changes (cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and moral) that directly influence their classroom behavior and achievement. The Carnegie Council (1989) has termed an exemplary middle school as "a school within a school" (p. 38) with interdisciplinary groups of teachers and advisory and exploratory programs.

Wood and Muth (1991) report a great need for improvement in instruction in middle schools; i.e., mode of presentation, instructional format, use of textbooks and materials, nature of classroom activities, questioning, critical thinking, and problem solving. Middle school students are social and value their peer relationships and

time to interact (Savin-Williams & Demo, 1984). However, the whole class-lecture method of new content remains in the majority of U. S. middle schools (Cuban, 1984; Goodlad, 1984). This continues in spite of ample research to support collaborative learning (Lehr, 1984; Slavin, 1983) and teacher modeling; i.e., teacher demonstrates processes, strategies, assignments, and techniques (Wood & Muth, 1991).

Many content area teachers merely tell their students to read the chapter and answer the questions. This is followed by some discussion and an objective test. Improvements in instructional format call for a move from large amounts of time spent on presenting new content, which does not help students read or internalize (Smith & Feathers, 1983) to more direct instruction with demonstration and guided and independent practice (Baumann, 1983).

Reading Instruction Paradigms

Huey (1908) states that in North Babylon "reading and writing had passed the pictograph stage eight thousand years ago" (p. 1). Since that time reading and writing instruction has gone from whole, meaningful teaching to a breakdown of skills and back. Reading instruction consisted of drilling letters and syllables in the ancient days of Greece and Rome and continued this way through the Middle Ages. Much later the whole-word method was brought

to America, when Horace Mann returned from Germany with his new-found approach. This was a reaction to his questioning the skill and drill of letters and syllables being taught in America at that time.

The three philosophies studied here; i.e., mastery of specific skills, unified language acquisition, and integrated language arts, reflect a continuation of these various instructional shifts from one perspective to another. A debate has persisted in recent years by both sides, namely, a basic difference between the "skills-based" and the "holistic" philosophies (Cheek, 1989). Samuels and Schachter (1963) refer to it as "subskill" and "holistic" labels. Iverson and Tunmer (1993) also identified three distinct types of classrooms epitomizing the philosophical continuum: skills-based, whole language, and "mixed." In the "mixed" classrooms the teacher combines some aspects of the first two.

As I attended and eventually presented workshops on whole language, I noticed a lack of understanding by many teachers, something which I had experienced earlier, of knowing precisely how the philosophy translates into actual classroom practices. This was evident as teachers graded journal entries each week, continued giving spelling lists on Monday and testing on Friday, and gave numerous worksheets to practice skills taught in mini-lessons.

As the other whole-language pilot teachers and I discussed this common problem, we realized a need to illustrate the transition.

Explanations and Models of Reading

There are numerous philosophies of reading. To facilitate this discussion, I will replicate categories from several studies (Kinzer, 1988; Leu & Kinzer, 1987; Kinzer & Carrick, 1986) which represent a synergistic relationship of models of how reading takes place and views about how reading develops, and finally, present three related classroom strategies as a means of comparison and contrast.

The theoretical models of how reading takes place which I will discuss are: Goodman's (1985) transactional-psycholinguistics model, which reflects a reader-based explanation (Goodman, 1986; Smith, 1988); Gough's (1985) linear sequence model, which reflects a text-based explanation; and Rumelhart's (1985) interactive model, mirroring a combination of both previous models or an interactive explanation (Anderson, et al., 1985; Rumelhart, 1977).

Views of How Reading Takes Place

The views which are reflected by these models of how reading takes place are text-based, interactive, and reader-based. In the text-based perspective, the text is the primary source of information and the students' goal is

to make meaning from the text, suggesting that there is one correct way of interpreting what the author intended. The next is interactive, where students are believed to use both text information and personal knowledge to develop meaning. The reader's expectations of the printed texts, in the interactive view, are equally as important as accurately recognizing the word while reading, because meaning is the joint effort of the reader and the text. Finally, the reader-based view involves the student's prior knowledge to bring meaning to the text, as the teacher encourages students to have different interpretations. In this view, student's background knowledge and experience play a major role in the comprehension of the text. The beliefs which represent how reading takes place and their respective models will facilitate a connection to the classroom practices presented later.

Views of How Reading Develops

These beliefs are operationalized into practices in the classroom. Leu and Kinzer utilize a triad of explanations about how reading ability develops, these are mastery of specific skills (Flesch, 1955, 1981, Chall, 1983); differential acquisition (Samuels & Eisenberg, 1981); and holistic explanations (Clay, 1980; Goodman, 1994). Mastery of specific skills presents a view of reading whereby learning a number of sequential specific skills will produce readers. Holistic language

acquisition, which I will refer to as integrated instruction, reflects the belief that all language processes are involved in the act of reading (Watson, 1988). These two interpretations of literacy "draw on sharply contrasting notions of teaching and learning" (Dahl & Freppon, 1995, p. 50). Finally, the unified explanation, focuses on a combination of each of the previous categories.

Integrated Language Arts

In my transition to whole language, a philosophy in keeping with holistic acquisition and integrated language arts, I feared a loss of control and structure in my classroom that the skills-based philosophy had insured. Initially, I did indeed relinquish both. Watson (1988) states that, "Whole language means that all systems of language are involved in any literary encounter." This meant noise and movement! This was in direct contrast to my lecturing to students who listened quietly as they sat in six neat rows of five. Whole language is student-centered; students are allowed to interact through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

A whole language praxis exists in which theory and practice are integrated. Teachers are able to test their understanding with the reality of their classrooms. And in doing so they add to the knowledge base foundational to that belief system (Goodman, 1994, p. 346).

This type of classroom integration of language skills is grounded in the research of many fields. Seminal works

in the areas of psycholinguistics, sociology, anthropology, child development, and psychology have led the way for whole language in the teaching of reading and writing. According to Vygotsky (1962), "The word without meaning is not a word but an empty sound" (p 244). This concept that words must have meaning is one of the basic tenets of whole language. This basic principle stems "from a desire to find out or tell something" (Huey, 1908, p. 279) which intrinsically motivates us to learn language.

Jean Piaget (1970) suggests that human beings acquire knowledge by building it from the inside through interaction with the environment. Further, Dewey (1966) proposes that our classrooms should be democratic, where students are allowed to think and reflect for themselves, and where students are encouraged to view education as an integration of the curriculum. Through this integration, reading and writing are developmental social processes learned naturally through immersion in complete texts of literature.

In developmental psychology, Piaget (1970) has determined four stages of cognitive development among early adolescents. According to him, middle school students are in a transitional stage between concrete and formal operations. This indicates that early adolescents are able to begin interacting through logical application, analyzing language metacognitively, as well as, applying it in

hypothetical situations. At this time it is important that teachers display respect and approval as students attempt to explore and understand that learning takes place when we relate new experiences to our past personal experiences (Piaget, 1970). This can be encouraged through Glasser's (1986) collaborative groups (encourager, praiser, summarizer, and checker) allowing student interactions as they search for new experiences through the integration of literature.

In the past I felt that grades were an excellent motivation; of course, I was teaching students who were chosen for this bilingual program through teacher recommendations, grades, and scores (80 percent and above in all areas) on the CAT (California Achievement Test). They naturally were students who had parental encouragement and concern. Now I also question this as Bruner (1960) contradicts my idea of grades to motivate my students by stating that, "Ideally, interest in the material to be learned is the best stimulus to learning, rather than such external goals as grades or later competitive advantage" (p. 14).

Some educational theorists have also informed us of ways to implement whole language in our classrooms. Graves (1983) created a writing workshop where children feel free to take risks, and explore language learning with the confidence that a professional will facilitate or scaffold

when they need help. Atwell (1987) demonstrates the complex workings of her reading and writing workshop, as she and her students write for authentic purposes and in response to full-length literature.

Most importantly, in this type of classroom environment there is time to engage in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Goodman (1986) states:

Whole language is clearly a lot of things to a lot of people; It's a way of bringing together a view of language, a view of learning, and a view of people, in particular two special groups of people: kids and teachers (p. 5).

It is based on the holistic understanding that written language should be taught in functional and purposeful situations where learners are involved in communicating with their world at home, at school, and in all aspects of their environment. In keeping with this functional and natural aspect of whole language "...we see no sequence of skills or language units and certainly no hierarchy for the ordering of instruction in skills or language units" (Goodman, 1981, p. 5).

The role of the teacher in instruction is that of guide, facilitator, and "kid watcher," who willingly gives feedback and who does not ignore a teachable moment, simply because it does not appear on her lesson plan. There is a premium on scaffolding in this type of social environment. Integrated language arts or whole language, is a holistic process of language is reader-based.

A reader-based analysis of the reading process assumes that meaning takes place in the mind of the reader and that the goal of reading is to bring meaning to the text. In whole language "... readers must be selective and use only as much of the print as necessary to predict the meaning and confirm their predictions" (Goodman, 1981, p. 7). As the reader becomes better at predicting, he becomes a better reader. The reader is always seeking meaning from all cues of language, not only sounds or words. Teachers should expect and encourage students to have different interpretations of the text. As the text is discussed, verbalizing pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies facilitate students internalizing their thoughts on comprehension as they read.

Cambourne (1994, 1988) examined this integrated process and proposed that literacy can be achieved just as oral language if teachers simulate these conditions for student metacognitive strategies. "Linguistic rules are learned under certain conditions, which are dramatically different from those traditionally used in schools (Cambourne, 1994, p. 332).

He suggested the following conditions which clarify how whole language can be understood. First, immersion in a total language environment of constant reading and writing. Second, the teacher demonstrates how texts are constructed and used. Teachers teach by example through

reading and writing with their classes. Third, teachers expect student success with language. Fourth, the responsibility of students is to make their own decisions about their own learning. Fifth, the teachers provide opportunities to use language in authentic ways. Sixth, students are encouraged to take risks with freedom to experiment with language and make mistakes. Seventh, response and feedback must be given to students by knowledgeable and caring adults. Finally, evaluation is informal and authentic, incorporating observation, participation, process writing, and portfolio assessment.

Some strategies which facilitate the whole language philosophy include thematic units, writing and reading as processes, readers' theater, book talks (as opposed to book reports), journals, author's chair, sustained silent reading, peer tutoring, conferences, dramatizations, authentic assessments, listening to literature and mini-lessons (Heald-Taylor, 1989; Atwell, 1987; Tierney, Readence, & Dishner, 1990). These strategies occur in a workshop atmosphere (Rief, 1992; Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986) where students can actually experience reading, writing, listening, and speaking individually, as well as, in groups.

In keeping with the tenets discussed earlier, Atwell (1987) advocates time, ownership, and response in her reading and writing workshop. Time for her students to

read and write; her students' selection of the topics they will read and write; and a teacher who is caring and sensitive and who responds to reading and writing as well as allowing students the time and encouragement to respond to the literature.

Goodman's Model of Reading

Goodman (1994) states that the "core meaning of 'whole' is integrated, so integration of language with inquiry, problem solving, and cognitive learning is fundamental" (p. 342). His model is an example of a top-down theory, which considers that reading occurs in a whole-to-part manner. The steps in his suggested process are as follows:

- (1) An eye movement fixates on new material.
- (2) The reader selects graphic cues from the field of vision.
- (3) A perceptual image of part of the text is formed.
- (4) An image results from perceptions of what the reader sees and what he expects to see, based on his strategies, cognitive style, knowledge, and particularly contextual constraints from previous material analyzed.
- (5) The reader searches his memory for related syntactic, semantic, phonological cues to enrich the perceptual image.

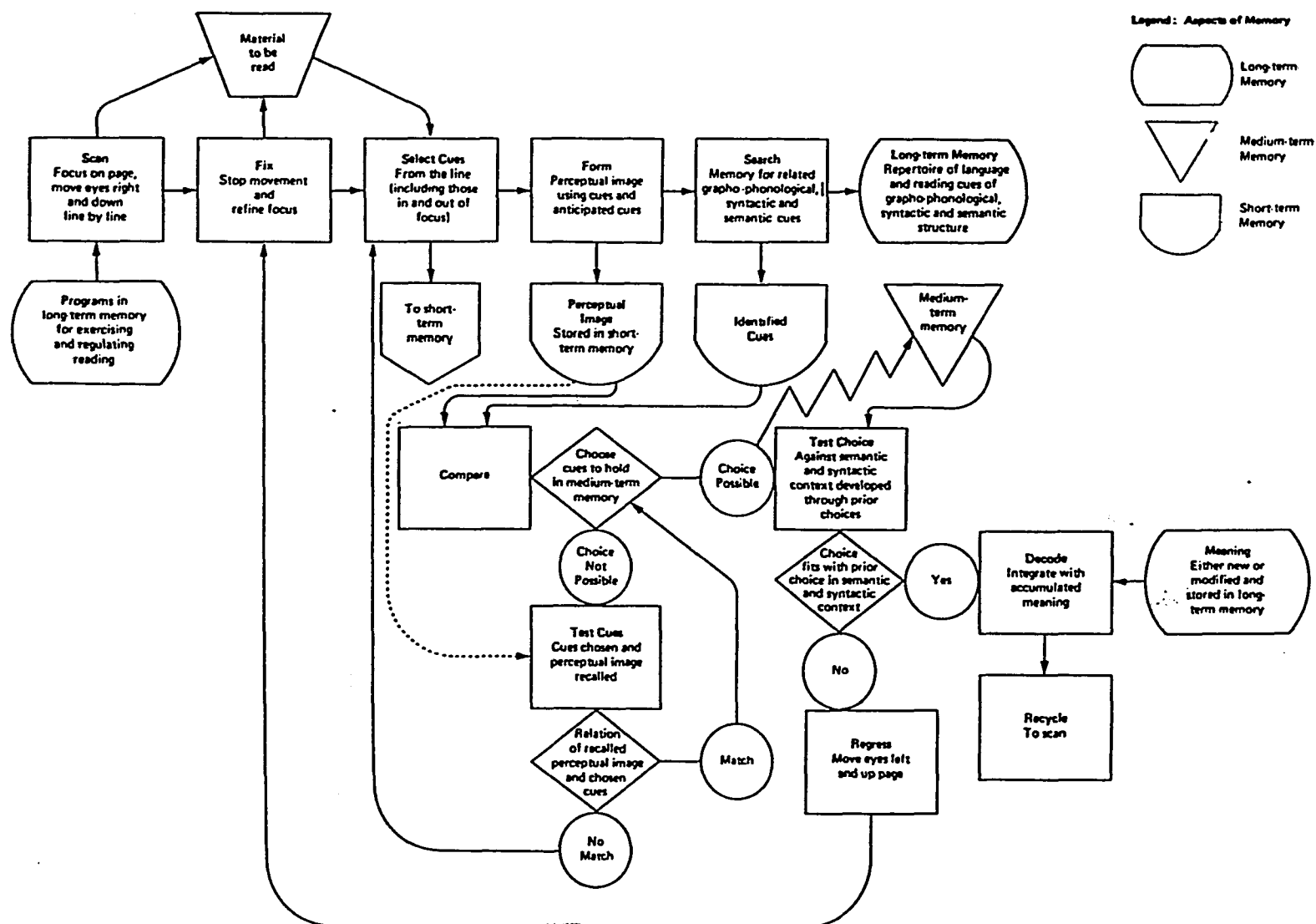


Figure 2.2 Goodman's Model of Reading

- (6) The reader makes a guess or tentative choice consistent with graphic cues. If it is successful, it is held in medium-term memory; if it is not successful, the reader tries again.
- (7) Finally, the hypothesis is tested against knowledge for grammatical and syntactic acceptability. If it fits, it is stored in long-term memory and predictions are made about forthcoming text. If it is not successful, the process is repeated.

An Eighth Grade Integrated Language Arts Lesson

Below I describe a fifty-minute lesson which adheres to the integrated language arts criteria for instructing reading.

- (1) Status-of-the-class-chart (Each student reports what they plan to complete for that particular class period.)
- (2) The students begin working in group activities or individually at the different centers in the classroom.
- (3) The teacher puts copies of *OH Captain! My Captain!* in the envelope in the front of the classroom. Each student may have one.
- (4) She approaches two students who had asked her about metaphors.
- (5) She announces to the class that she will read a poem addressing this literary concept.

- (6) Several other students come to this group. She reminds the students about their question from yesterday and asks them to listen.
- (7) After she reads the poem, she asks, "How does the poem make you feel?" "Why is the captain so important and to whom?" "Is anyone familiar with the word metaphors?"
- (8) After some discussion, she moves to another group of students to conference about their writing on other topics of their own choosing.
- (9) At the end of class, any student may sit in the author's chair and read his writing.

Unified Philosophy of Reading

Many of the teachers in our school division have expressed their concern that whole language does not address skills. Although many workshops addressed this concern, many teachers could not feel comfortable without daily direct instruction of skills. A solution for many may be to employ approaches more in keeping with the unified philosophy of reading, which contains qualities from both the integrated and mastery of specific skills philosophy.

In the unified philosophy, the reading process occurs as expectations about a particular text topic are just as important as accurate word recognition while reading; this allows the reader to compensate and strengthen weaknesses

by interacting with the text. Meaning comes from both the text and the reader; a reader's prior knowledge, expectations, and other factors that reside "behind the eye" interact to form comprehension (Savage, 1989). Class begins with direct instruction with the whole class then students are allowed to work in groups or individually as the teacher assists those who need her attention.

In unified instruction, students use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them, addressing issues such as students learning best by reading widely and often, and others learning best through direct instruction. Readers use a variety of strategies as they read by decoding and guessing in using literature. The teacher directs the lesson; however, allowing for individual differences among students in making decisions of how to teach a topic as well as in selecting and using text materials. Teachers also spend more time working with less proficient readers, allowing the more proficient to work independently.

Much research shows that learners are more prone to learn in situations where they are aware of what the learning tasks are and when teachers specifically teach them (Duffy, Roehler, & Putman, 1987). Also, readers must be sensitive to the relationships among the various elements of information within a text as they integrate new and old information (Duffy, 1990).

Heilman, Blair, and Rupley (1994) state that, "the key to unified instruction is the active communication and interaction between the teacher and student" (p. 33).

Unified teachers serve as mediators as they begin instruction; as instruction continues the teacher becomes more of a facilitator. Instruction varies from direct, well-structured skill lessons to more indirect strategy lessons, depending on the nature of the learning task.

Heilman, Blair, and Rupley (1994) distinguish between specific-skills instruction which require lower-level cognitive processing and which "are more or less automatic routines" (Dole, et al., 1991) and strategy instruction which requires higher-level cognitive processing and is less specific and emphasizes plans under the conscious control of the reader.

Specific skills and strategy requires a variation of control by the teacher, but are an important ingredient in unified teaching. The greatest degree of control is at the beginning of the lessons; this declines afterwards, allowing proficient readers to work independently. There are a variety of reading materials; however, some skill worksheets are used. Evaluation is a combination of subjective and objective tests, allowing for multiple interpretations.

Rummelhart's Reading Model

Rummelhart's (1985) objective was to present a framework for the development of models, with emphasis on highly interactive parallel processing, as an alternative to the serial flow-chart. The process is as follows:

- (1) Information is registered in a Visual Information Store (VIS) or icon.
- (2) A Feature Extraction Device transfers this information.
- (3) The Pattern Synthesizer is the central component of the model which draws upon a wide variety of different sources of information, to choose the best interpretation of the text.
- (4) All of the different hypotheses are gathered in the Message Center and evaluated by checking them against others in other parts of the system. (Change in emphasis at various levels in the system may lead to new hypotheses being entered into the Message Center to be tested.)
- (5) After continuous checking, which occurs simultaneously at all levels, the hypotheses that have been strengthened and are compatible with the other hypotheses are defined as a set. This set of hypotheses is accepted as the final interpretation of the text at each of the different levels of analysis.

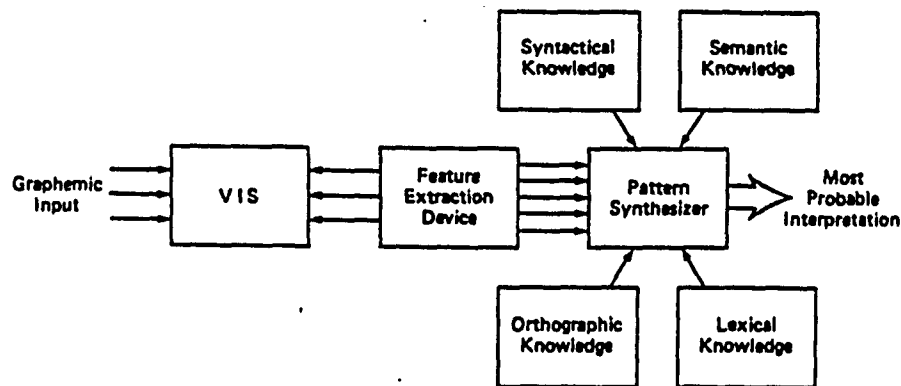


Figure 2.3 Rumelhart's Model of Reading

An Eighth Grade Unified Language Lesson

Below I have described a unified lessons which begins with whole-group direct instruction with teacher modelling and finally with independent student work.

- (1) Beginning class activities (roll call, messages).
- (2) The teacher distributes sheets of poetry terms and a whole-class discussion of each term takes place.
- (3) The teacher asks open-ended questions about the poem she will read to the class in order to stimulate students' prior knowledge. As she reads the poem she encourages students to react with personal experiences as she tries to connect new information to their prior knowledge.

- (4) Teacher models strategies of understanding poetry to facilitate students internalizing strategies for themselves.
- (5) Students are encouraged to read and write poems incorporating similar strategies as they work independently or in small groups.
- (6) Teacher continues this strategy until she feels students are comfortable and knowledgeable of poetic devices and strategies for using them.

Mastery of Specific Skills Philosophy

During the 1960s and early 1970s in my education classes, I remember doing countless behavioral objectives. This term applied to a listing of skills associated with some particular learning task, consisting of descriptions of what a learner should be able to do to demonstrate mastery of each skill. We became proficient at writing these objectives during our senior year of undergraduate training. Each methods' course required us to plan with countless objectives to ensure that each specific skill was covered.

We phrased our objectives "The student should be able to..." and then typed these plans neatly. Each reading skill was checked as students "learned" them. Many of the experts felt skills involved in learning to read could be identified, listed, and tested. Carillo (1976) in his *Teaching Reading: A Handbook* states:

Reading is actually a cohesive set of skills that must be carefully presented in an orderly sequence to be efficiently used then and later. The most important ingredients, then, are the teacher and the teaching (p. 1).

An essential ingredient in this philosophy is the use of a basal reader with its ancillary materials including workbooks and precise instructions to the teacher for each day of teaching. The basal reader is employed in eighty-five percent of all classrooms in the United States today (NAEP, 1993).

The mastery of specific skills philosophy views reading as a bottom-up process of getting meaning from the sequential processing of low-level information (letters) to higher-level information (word groups and their meanings). Learning occurs through drill and practice of individual skills, which are delegated by teachers and curriculum.

In this teaching environment the text is the primary source of information; therefore, when printed material is summarized, it should restate the text. If students have not comprehended text material the way the author intended, they have misunderstood the text.

Gough's Model of Reading

In spite of Gough's reassessment (1985) in his study, *One Second of Reading: Postscript* stating that his model failed for lack of dealing with sentence context, I chose this model because it clearly illustrates the model of reading that many teachers follow. This model is based on

a text-based or bottom-up view, which asserts that reading is a process of decoding letters and words. It demonstrates a linear and hierarchial flow from the glimpse of the printed word to the completion of decoding.

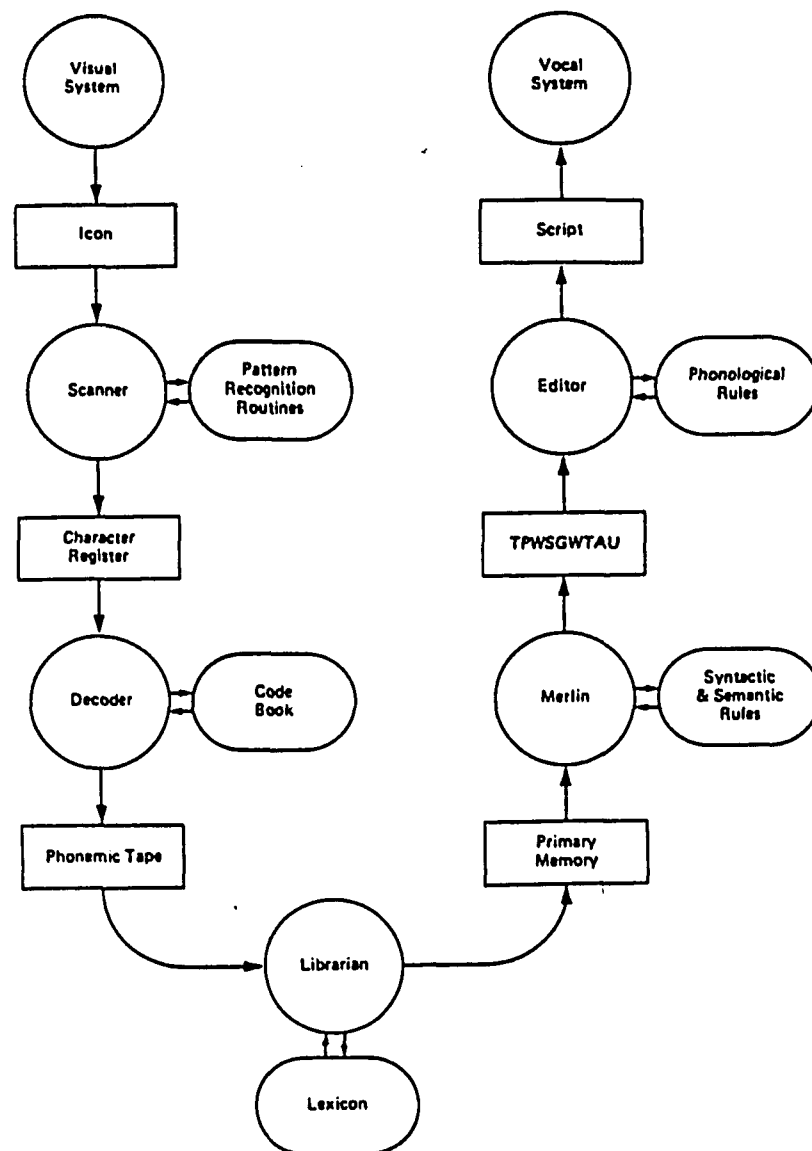


Figure 2.4 Gough's Model of Reading

The process is as follows:

- (1) It begins with a visual fixation of information.
- (2) Next, the Icon registers this visual information until another fixation is made available.
- (3) This is followed by a scanner (with the help of pattern recognition routines held in long-term memory), which identifies a fixation as a sequence of letters operating from left to right.
- (4) A string of letters is placed on a Character Register.
- (5) Immediately, the Decoder "maps the characters onto a string of 'systematic-phonemes', hypothetical entities that are systematically related to speech but are capable of being set up much more rapidly than speech itself" (Gough, 1985, p. 131).
- (6) This is done with the help of a Code Book of grapheme-to-phoneme correspondence rules.
- (7) This message is stored temporarily into the Phonemic Tape (similar to a tape recording).
- (8) Next, the Librarian with the assistance of the Lexicon identifies the sequence holding them in Primary Memory.
- (9) Finally, the sentence can be parsed by Merlin (comprehensive device which draws upon syntactic and semantic rules to analyze the sentence) and place in another more stable form of storage termed TPWSGWTAU (The Place Where Sentences Go When They Are

Understood). The rest of this model is directed to voiced reading.

An Eighth Grade Mastery of Specific Skills Lesson

Below I have described a mastery of specific skills lesson in which the teacher and the text are the authority.

- (1) Roll call; all students have quietly prepared for class.
- (2) The teacher instructs the class to have the worksheet with literary terms, which was completed for homework, on their desks to be checked for homework points.
(Incompleted work is a zero.)
- (3) Teacher walks around the room and checks homework.
- (4) Students are called upon to give correct answers, which were found in the back of the reading basal.
- (5) After all terms are covered, the teacher reads a poem from the basal reader and asks students if they observed any of the terms discussed.
- (6) Teacher assigns a poem to be read and evaluated (She gives instances of literary devices used by the author). This is to be completed for homework.
- (7) Homework is picked up and points are awarded. These will be returned the next day.
- (8) Test on Friday. (Evaluation of poem chosen by instructor. Exact interpretation is encouraged.)

Beliefs and Practices

A study by Harste and Burke (1977) suggests that teachers make decisions about reading instruction according to their beliefs about how reading and learning occur. These two researchers also project practices which are ultimately influenced, such as goals, activities, materials, and interaction patterns. Others (DeFord, 1985; Leu & Kinzer, 1987; Kamil & Pearson, 1979) suggest that results are mixed on the teachers' concurrent positions toward beliefs and practices. DeFord suggests that teachers of the same theoretical orientation have similar behaviors and expectations. Harste and Burke (1977) suggest that theoretical orientations influence teacher goals for his/her respective class; teachers' perceived ideas of "good" behavior; instructional procedures, materials, and information; evaluation, classroom environment which is conducive to reading growth; and the criteria used to determine growth in reading.

Research in this area of teachers' beliefs and practices relies on the use of instruments such as a set of statements about reading and reading instruction. Teachers select statements which are appropriate to their own beliefs about reading. Researchers feel that these instruments indicate the teacher's beliefs (Deford, 1985; Leu and Kinzer, 1987; Kinzer, 1988; Leu & Kinzer, 1991; Readance, 1991; Wilson, Konopak, & Readance, 1992).

Kinzer (1988) investigated the belief systems across preservice and inservice elementary reading teachers to discover whether there were differences between each group indicating whether experience would affect consistency between teacher beliefs and practices. He also addressed the idea of whether instructional decisions were based on theoretical orientations. He employed two sets of fifteen beliefs' statements on (a) how reading develops and (b) how reading takes place. The instruments reflect the processes of reading which I addressed earlier in this chapter.

For inservice teachers, Kinzer placed the instruments in mailboxes with a return envelop. His participants chose among three sets of lesson plans to compare orientation with choice of instruction. He concluded that both groups with reader-based/holistic explanations tend to choose lessons reflecting their beliefs. On the contrary others, text-based, interactive, mastery of specific skills, and differential acquisition explanations did not choose lesson plans which were consistent with their theoretical orientations. This reflects an inconsistency between beliefs and practices for these groups.

Readence, Konopak, and Wilson (1991) in a similar study attempted to discover the beliefs of secondary content area reading teachers and their practices in the classroom. These researchers adapted the beliefs instrument and administered it to inservice and preservice

teachers. Results indicate that inservice teachers were more consistent in beliefs and practices than preservice teachers.

Wilson, Konopak, and Readence (1992) conducted a study on teacher beliefs in which they examined, in depth, a secondary teacher's beliefs, decisions, plans, and instruction regarding content area reading. Methods used were surveys, class observations, document collection, and interviews with students. The results were limited because of the use of only one participant and the self-reporting nature of the beliefs' instruments. Her beliefs and practices were consistent in that she believed in and practiced the use of prior knowledge as a basis of new learning; however, she was inconsistent in text-student interaction for meaning development, because she continually controlled the interpretation of poems. Also, her responses appeared to reflect what she feels should be done rather than what is done in her classroom.

Richardson, et al. (1991) explored the relationship between teachers' beliefs about the teaching of reading comprehension and classroom practice. These researchers employed a beliefs interview technique, borrowed from anthropology, and classroom observations. The results indicated that the teachers' beliefs do relate to their classroom practices. Also, a case study illustrating a teacher not relating practice to her beliefs, indicating a

teacher in the process of change, where beliefs were preceding practice. Suggested is the idea "...that the way teachers adapt or adopt new practices in their classrooms relates to whether their beliefs match the assumptions inherent in the new programs or methods" (p. 560).

The studies which I have explored support consistencies with beliefs and choices of lesson plans and types of instruction in reader-based and interactive categories. Also, Kinzer (1988) supports the idea that inservice teachers are more concerned about practical issues rather than theoretical issues. He also concludes that preservice teachers are more consistent with choices of how reading takes place and how reading develops because they are more closely tied to the university setting.

Summary

The key to providing balanced reading instruction is not in different classroom programs, but with informed teachers who critically reflect on theory and practice to provide the most powerful instruction to meet the needs of the children in their class (Routman, 1991). This research study was born out of my experiences in working with middle school teachers within a new paradigm of instructing students, in which reflection upon our instructional beliefs was imperative.

Many teachers reflected and changed their instruction, other teachers reflected and did not change, while still

others refused any risk of changing the way they have always taught. What circumstances lead some to reflect on the reading process and how their instruction should follow, while others are unaffected by the endless workshops and discussions? Through my research, I hope to shed new light on possible implications and ramifications of grass-roots attempts at change in teacher decisions about instruction.

CHAPTER III
METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF
RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

This study is based on the principles of applied research; applied researchers study real-world problems and experiences (Patton, 1990, p. 154). The purpose of this study is to explore the real-world problems and experiences of the teachers in my district and how beliefs about reading are operationalized into classroom practices. Also, applied research is used because this type of research "contributes knowledge that will help people understand the nature of a problem..." (Patton, 1990, p. 153). Theoretical orientations to reading development and instruction and a descriptive interpretation of how these orientations operationalized into classroom practices are researched and the stories are told in the teachers' and students' voices.

Three methods of data collection, in-depth, open-ended interviews, direct classroom observations, and a beliefs' instrument (Kinzer; 1988) allowed me to find and analyze common themes, which helped to understand my participants' responses and classroom practices (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 1990). I triangulated my data by using multiple sources of data collection: surveys of all regular middle school teachers, interviews with the seven participants, and classroom observations.

Research Question

I became involved in a pilot program attempting to incorporate whole language in our middle school language arts classes. I observed teachers, who believed in workshop learning environments, encouraging reading and writing process; however, practiced fragmented, isolated learning. In speaking to a fifth-grade teacher about possible ideas for my study, I expressed my curiosity about this difference between beliefs and practices. Her response was spontaneous and honest, she simply stated, "Maybe we don't know any other way." This teacher, a very effective teacher in both adult and children's opinions in our community, had not gone through the series of workshops that many other teachers had experienced. Another, who had gone through inservices commented, "What I do works. It's worked for me for twenty years. The parents like it. I'm comfortable with it. I'm keeping it." My research questions were the result of my search for ways to understand both.

- (1) What common themes arise from the reading theories and practices of teachers who teach reading?
- (2) How do teachers attempt to translate their reading theories into practice?

- (3) How do teachers remain true to their own beliefs and continue teaching according to the dictates of this school system?

I researched the teachers' beliefs about reading which have been tempered by their training, experience, and the dictates from the district and state. I set out to explore possible explanations for the differences in reading teachers' beliefs and classroom practices. I felt the best way to arrive at these explanations would be through naturalistic inquiry, based on teacher and student observations and interviews in their school environment. After receiving permission to speak to all middle school language arts teachers, I conducted brief presentations about my research questions and asked them to assist me by completing the beliefs instruments.

Data Collection

Case Studies

I employed the multiple-case-study design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in order to understand each participant in depth. In this medium, individual differences are reflected in each of my participants. This strategy allowed them to present a picture of their personal and professional lives and the effect of their experiences on their teaching practices. As each case study developed, I focused on each teacher's talk about what she/he believed, what practices they felt were important, culled

consistences and inconsistencies between their beliefs and practices, and finally gleaned common themes which appeared. However, I also allowed each participant to speak freely on other topics of their choice. This freedom allowed my study to develop in unexpected personal directions.

Materials

Beliefs Instrument

All regular language arts teachers were given the Leu and Kinzer (1988) Questionnaire Aimed at Beliefs Regarding How Reading Ability Develops and Questionnaire Aimed at Beliefs Regarding How One Reads (See Appendix A and B). These instruments were given in order to determine theoretical orientations (how reading takes place) and instructional preferences (how reading develops). These surveys consider the aspects of comprehension; i.e., decoding knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, syntactic knowledge, discourse knowledge, readiness, and affective aspects. Leu and Kinzer (1988) attempted to explain how these aspects contribute to reading comprehension, as reflected in the previously explained models of the reading process, i.e., Gough (1985), Goodman (1985), and Rummelhart (1985). These explanations are as follows:

- (1) text-based explanation assumes that meaning exists in the text rather than in what a reader brings to a text

and that reading consists of translating printed words into sounds, then into meanings;

- (2) reader-based explanation assumes that readers use background knowledge and the evolving meaning of a text to make predictions of text which follows; and
- (3) interactive explanation assumes that reading is the result of both translation and expectation.

(See Appendix C.)

These explanations are the basis for teachers' theoretical orientations about how reading takes place. They also lead us to predict how instruction will ultimately follow. Text-based explanations would operationalize to a mastery of specific skills practice. Accordingly, reading ability would develop as students master the specific skills taught directly and deductively by a teacher. A reader-based explanation would indicate integrated language acquisition, which demonstrates that reading ability develops as students engage in inductive learning through holistic and meaningful activities. Finally, an interactive explanation would indicate a unified language acquisition, which assumes both specific reading skills and meaningful language activities.

The two surveys, which consisted of fifteen statements each, were scored according to Kinzer (1988). The first instrument, How One Reads (See Appendix A), was scored by indicating a majority of statements chosen by a participant

that reflected a particular explanation, then it was categorized under that explanation. When an equal number of statements resulted in two categories, the result was interactive. Answers which indicated categories are:

- (a) text-based statements are 1, 3, 5, 10, and 12;
- (b) reader-based statements are 2, 4, 9, 11, and 15;
- (c) interactive statements are 6, 7, 8, 13, and 14.

On the second part of the survey, How Reading Develops (See Appendix A), scoring was similar. Responses which indicated categories for this instrument are:

- (a) mastery of specific skills statements are 1, 5, 6, 11, and 12;
- (b) integrated language arts statements are 2, 4, 8, 9, and 14;
- (c) interactive statements are 3, 7, 10, 13, and 15.

Categories and Subjects

Based on teachers' selections of statements, the participants were divided into corresponding categories. I explained to them that their own professional knowledge and understanding of reading and how it takes place and develops, were sufficient to fill out the survey. Their individual responses uninfluenced by any instruction created an honest, personal response. I feel their responses truly reflected how they indeed felt. They were assured that their responses would be confidential and that

their names were needed solely because I would return to interview them. I also assured them that there were no right or wrong answers, only their opinions.

After administering the Leu & Kinzer (1988) instrument to eighty-six regular language arts teachers in the school district, I established categories (See Table 3.1).

Categories that were created were:

- (1) Reader-Based/Integrated Language Acquisition;
- (2) Interactive/Integrated Language Acquisition;
- (3) Text-Based/Integrated Language Acquisition;
- (4) Reader-Based/Unified Language Acquisition;
- (5) Interactive/Unified Language Acquisition;
- (6) Text-Based/Unified Language Acquisition;
- (7) Reader-Based/Mastery of Specific Skills;
- (8) Interactive/Mastery of Specific Skills;
- (9) Text-Based/Mastery of Specific Skills.

Also years of teaching experience was considered as a factor indicating a relationship of experience to beliefs and practices.

Table 3.1 indicates the frequency of responses on the two beliefs statements; as well as, percentages and raw scores in each category.

Table 3.1 Frequency of Responses on Belief Statements:
Raw scores and percentages n=86

Explanations for how reading takes place					
Text-Based		Reader-Based		Interactive	
2	2.32%	46	53.48%	38	44.18%
Explanations for how reading develops					
Mastery of Specific Skills		Integrated Language Acquisition		Unified Language Acquisition	
2	2.32%	62	72.09%	22	25.58%

Table 3.2 indicates the number in each category that resulted from combining both explanations of how one reads and how reading develops.

Table 3.2 Categories Determined by the Two Beliefs Statements

Category	Integrated Language	Unified Language	Mastery of Specific Skills
Reader-Based	33	12	0
Interactive	29	9	1
Text-Based	1	1	0

These categories, as shown in Table 3.2 illustrated my seven case studies; there were no participants in categories three and nine. I requested participant interviews and classroom observations. A participant was randomly chosen, unless a category consisted of only one participant. In selecting participants in categories with more than one member, I excluded teachers who had been in the Whole Language Pilot Program and randomly selected others. All of my teachers had several things in common:

- (1) each was a middle school teacher of regular language arts;
- (2) each was supervised by the same person at the central office;
- (3) each was expected to follow the state curriculum guide as a reference to their curriculum.

However, each teacher's own personal and professional subjectivity was also considered:

- (1) each had taught for a specific number of years;
- (2) each had a different personal background (family, ethnic origin, background experiences);
- (3) each had their own specific area of expertise and educational training.

Attention to subjectivity allowed me to develop an appreciation for each individual. As Clark and Peterson (1986) suggested, "teaching is complex, demanding, and uniquely human" (p. 293). Combs (1982) added to this perception, "what makes a good teacher is a highly personal matter having to do with the teacher's personal system of beliefs" (p. 3). Agne, et al. (1994) stated that "Research is discovering that teacher beliefs can make or break the learning process" (p. 141).

As I collected data, I explored these differences and similarities and how they influenced individual teacher's reading beliefs and practices. Had the "...teachers presented themselves as the agent of power and influence in reading instruction, or had they abdicated their power to the basal.

I interviewed the supervisor of the participants, to clarify my understanding about textbook usage in each of the content areas as well as in language arts. In our conversation, I learned that teachers' use of texts is simply an assumption by teachers and not an expectation by an administration. This was in complete contradiction to what I had believed to be true before. Along with many other teachers, I had taught under the premise that the use of basals was obligatory. Our school district just recently adopted language arts texts, against the wishes of many language arts teachers, who felt that the present text was adequate. The district, because of financial problems, had had difficulty supplying sets of texts, already adopted. Why adopt more texts, when the "experts" in the classrooms demanded that they not be adopted?

Procedures

Guided interviews with these middle school reading teachers enabled me to understand the experiences and the meaning they made of their role as a reading teacher. Seidman (1991) suggests, "...that the meaning people make

of their experiences affects the way they carry out those experiences" (p. 4). I explored this meaning teachers attach to the teaching of reading in the way they presently teach. Through the use of interviews, I allowed my participants to tell their own stories.

The interviews revealed how their beliefs about reading were transferred to the classroom. All participants engaged in formal interviews consisting of five open-ended questions. Follow-up questions were directed when the researcher needed clarification. The primary interview questions were as follows:

- (1) Tell me a little about yourself and how you've gotten to this point in your career.
- (2) Explain what determines what you teach and the materials you will use in your reading class.
- (3) Describe a classroom lesson. What activities do you and your students engage in during the course of your reading or language arts class?
- (4) Describe how and when you evaluate your students.
- (5) How do students develop their reading skills in your classroom? What do you consider to be your role in this development?

Data Analysis

As each interview was completed, I transcribed the tapes and allowed the participants to preview them for accuracy, adding to or clarifying any part which they felt

was necessary. After this data was collected, I conducted classroom observations of each participant and a student from the class of each participant. Data analysis consisted of comparisons of beliefs and practices of participants' beliefs about how reading takes place and how it develops, and what is transferred into actual classroom practices. I discussed briefly my intentions for my research and requested the participation of the participants. I then interviewed each participant for 30-40 minutes and then transcribed each interview. Next a classroom observation was conducted and a student interview.

Cross-Case Analysis

I used a cross-case analysis as I gleaned data from the interview transcriptions. I grouped data from different participants' answers to interview questions and analyzed their different perspectives on central issues (Patton, 1990). Recurring themes and patterns (Kamil, 1985) and potential differences were explored to formulate hypotheses and to develop case studies. The Constant Comparative Method of qualitative analysis (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) allowed me to integrate categories and create my own theory of reading teachers' beliefs and their relationship to practices.

Confidentiality

Each participant was assured that her/his identity would remain confidential and measures would be taken to prevent any data from being linked to individual participants. Teacher participation in my research was authorized by the local school board; however, interviews and observations are voluntary. Each participant was provided with a consent form which identified the researcher's name, address, and telephone number, as well as, information about research purpose and use (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

I observed my participants as they conducted a two-hour language arts class, consisting of reading for one fifty-minute period and writing and grammar instruction for a second fifty-minute period. During the observations I focused on topics presented from my interview questions.

It is important that observations make up a part of my research. "Recognizing the limits on our understanding of others, we can still strive to comprehend them by understanding their actions" (Seidman, 1991, p. 3). The validity and reliability of this systematic observation requires more than just being present, looking around, and interviewing. It is not simply asking questions, but a continual reflection upon data and research circumstances. From this reflection I gleaned commonalities, as well as,

individual differences leading to potential cognizance of teachers' instructional decisions.

Summary

This study operationalizes a cross-case analysis, which consists of "...grouping together answers from different people to common questions or analyzing different perspectives on central issues" (Patton, 1990, p. 376). Participants took part in guided interviews, after which topics were grouped and analyzed for common themes. As themes began to emerge, I observed classes and began to verify relationships between beliefs and practices, and reveal each participant's complex and personal story.

The elements of trustworthiness were established through triangulation of data: beliefs' instrument, interviews, and observations. A holistic approach was used for data analysis through cross-case analysis. The identities of my participants remain confidential.

The results of this study provided important insights into the reading process to determine beliefs followed by naturalistic inquiry methods, such as interviews and observations to determine practices. Chapter 4 presents the case studies of the reader-based group; Chapter 5 presents the case studies of the interactive group; and finally, Chapter 6 presents the text-based group. Two participants were randomly selected in the reader-based group, three from the interactive group. However, as the

beliefs' instrument revealed only two teachers were studied in the text-based group. My conclusions will be discussed in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDIES OF READER-BASED GROUP

The first two case studies represent teachers who believed, based on the responses on the Leu and Kinzer (1988) Beliefs' Instrument, that students bring meaning to the text, that students use prior knowledge to anticipate and authenticate understanding, and that teachers should model and guide the lesson.

All language arts classes in the district are taught in blocks of two hours. This was created to encourage flexible planning with reading, writing, and grammar. All participants in this study took advantage of this flexibility, as they would sometimes extend reading time and decrease time spent writing, discuss interesting topics in greater depth and breadth or vary other activities for a particular day.

I interviewed each participant and asked, "Tell me a little about yourself and how you've gotten to this point in your career." Each participant mentioned what they had aspired to become. Does this desire to teach, as some of the participants declared, "I always knew I wanted to be a teacher," indicate future effectiveness in teaching?

Table 4.1 illustrates the categories created by the participants in this study.

Table 4.1 Categories of Participants

	Reader-Based	Interactive	Text-Based
Integrated Language	Case 1 Rita	Case 3 Ina	Case 6 Tonya
Unified Language	Case 2 Rose	Case 4 Ivan	Case 7 Tess
Mastery of Specific Skills	0	Case 5 Ida	0

Table 4.2 illustrates information about each participants which may indicate individual differences which may add to understanding the subjectivity of the participants.

Table 4.2 Reader-Based Participants

Category	Participant	Yrs.	Aspire	Education
Reader-Based/ Integrated Language Acquisition	Case 1 Rita	9	English Teacher	Bachelor of Arts English/ French
Reader-Based/ Unified Language Acquisition	Case 2 Rose	23	Actress	Bachelor of Arts English
Reader-Based/ Specific Skills Mastery	None			

Case 1

Reader-Based/Integrated Language Acquisition
ParticipantGeneral Characteristics

Rita has been teaching for nine years and has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and French. She always wanted to be an English teacher. "I knew I wanted to be an English teacher from about junior high school age. And when I got to high school, I had an English teacher who really solidified that decision for me." Rita taught English for three years in high school, "then I began having a family and I laid out of teaching for twelve years." She later returned to teaching after her children were in school. Returning after teaching high school and having children; Rita's assignment was middle school and a French classroom.

She taught French for two years, but asked to transfer to an English class, because she felt "very uncomfortable" with the French language after being away from it for twelve years. She now teaches eighth grade language arts taught in two hour blocks.

Educational Setting

Rita teaches at Evans Middle School, an affluent community school which, by mandated rezoning has included at-risk students from a low-economic area of the community. Rita's classroom is neatly arranged in five rows of six

desks. All desks are facing the teacher and her podium, which are in the front of the classroom. The teacher's desk is located in the rear of the classroom. The walls of her classroom display student posters of books they have read.

As Rita taught her lesson, she remained at the front of the classroom and students were continually reminded that they must be quiet, listen carefully, and speak only when addressed by the teacher.

Beliefs

Responses to the Leu and Kinzer (1988) Questionnaire reflected participant's theoretical beliefs about how reading develops and instructional beliefs and about how reading takes place. Rita feels that children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading. She perceives comprehension as a joint product of the reader and the text and that activities in the classroom should prepare students to understand a certain text. She views all knowledge sources (discourse, vocabulary, syntactic, decoding, and metacognitive) addressing comprehension; therefore, assisting different interpretations of a story.

Rita also believes that children should receive many opportunities to read materials unrelated to specific school learning tasks, because they learn best by reading widely. However, she did select an interactive statement,

which suggests that others learn best by direct instruction. She understands that children should be read to frequently while they are young to get a "feel" for what reading is like. Rita believes that opportunities should be created in the classroom to provide children with a reason to read.

Practices

Interview

Teaching practices were observed in the respective classrooms after participant interviews. When asked what determines what she teaches, Rita remarked that she was motivated by two things as she teaches eighth graders.

First,

...by the time these kids get to eighth grade, they dislike reading; therefore, part of my reading program is individualized reading, where they read whatever they wish, as long as they respond to the books in the way I ask them to respond. [Second,] I do specific, assigned readings, in class, especially short stories, poetry, and mythology, that I feel like gives them a background before they get to high school.

When asked about the district dictating curriculum demands, Rita commented:

No, I don't see that...I've never been told to do that, but in the curriculum guide there are certain reading skills. Most of those reading skills are developed through my book projects; in other words, in my book projects, I ask students to respond in certain ways to books that are teaching them those skills. For example, irony, they need to know what irony is, so I'll teach them a story where irony is important to the story. Then, we'll discuss it, ...but I've never been to a meeting where someone told me you have to teach this... .

I also asked Rita to tell me about the basal and its use in her classroom.

I have to tell you the truth, I'm not even sure what the current basal is, and I don't mind telling you that, or if anybody should hear the tape. I have two reading texts, classroom sets, in my room. One is *Triumphs*, which was the last reading text that I know anything about, and I have an old advanced reading level book called *Counterpoint*. I pull stories out, because of what they teach and what I think the kids need to be exposed to, not just the skills, but experientially, before they get to high school. But we don't use the book on a continual basis.

Her views on the use of the English basal.

Yes, I pretty much follow the book, but I don't go in exactly the same order of the book. And that's because I'm lazy. I can't get anything organized. I just found it easier for me to organize myself by simply following the order that the book had. And I could really incorporate that into my writing. I try to incorporate whatever it is we're doing in grammar at that particular time with that piece of writing.

As I questioned her about her activities, I began by asking about conferencing and journaling, or anything she might do during the course of a class period. Rita was very uninhibited and spoke from the heart.

First of all, let's just take normal reading. all, I do oral reading with them. During the course of that oral reading exercise, we come across anything that we have already covered, for instance, metaphor, simile, irony, or something to do with reading, ...then we'll stop and discuss it, but then we go on to individualized reading. I do book checks on them, where they tell me, you know, how far they've progressed since the last time. I do that about every three days. I'll ask them if there is anything in the book that you might want to share or that is confusing...you know questions that stimulate reading. Then we have share time so that they can recommend books to other students.

I also addressed evaluation with Rita. I simply asked the question and Rita spoke freely.

Evaluate, O.K., I have so many things. I do spelling tests; I do teach spelling, because our scores on the CAT were so bad and the papers that they wrote were so full of misspelled words. So, I went back and began teaching spelling again. But the total spelling grade for the whole six weeks is a very small percentage of the total number of points...so no child will ever go out even if they fail all the spelling tests. Monday, we go over the words and deal with whatever the spelling lesson is...suffixes or prefixes...and then everyday they have exercises.

In grammar, I grade both by grammar tests and by usage in their compositions. We have two major compositions per six weeks. That's not including the book projects, which are usually written. So, I evaluate all of their written work based upon what we're covering in grammar.

In reading, basically the only time I evaluate, until I find something better, is just their book projects. If they can respond to a book with what I'm asking, then I feel like they have read for understanding and they have learned; they have developed the skills that I was looking for. Once every three weeks they have to respond to a book. I use the sheet "101 Ways to Respond to a Book." I give them three or four questions and they have to choose from these. I don't give them the whole sheet. I limit them so that they will all be working at the same place.

I teach vocabulary in context. We may go over words ahead of time, maybe I'll give them the sentence with the word. I rarely test on vocabulary. I really don't see the point in it. If a child can understand the story; I don't care if he can quote me a definition. They're getting that skill in other areas that are more important to what the teachers want in those areas than it is to me...I don't really care about definitions.

I asked Rita what she felt was her role as teacher in her classroom.

I like that trendy word that came about a while back...facilitator. I feel like I'm here to help the kids, to help them get what I think is going to be beneficial to them...a better person, a better reader, a better writer, a better speaker, but then I also have

the responsibility of making sure they are prepared for high school. I do try to expose them to a lot of things and to help them see that it fits into the whole scheme of things. That's real difficult sometimes, because high school teachers have really come down hard on me about diagramming. I'm really not "gun ho" about it. But interestingly enough, I discovered that in teaching diagramming that many kids began to see how the sentences all fit together.

One day one kid said "When are we ever going to need this?" and I said "I don't see after high school anyone will ever come to you and ask you to diagram a sentence."

All students had a literature textbook; however, students are allowed to check out books from the school library. The literature book used in this eighth grade classroom is *Triumphs* (1989) Lev 0, Houghton Mifflin. No workbooks are used.

Observation

I arrived to observe Rita's classroom as students were packing and preparing to leave, students were speaking, but the noise level was very low. I spoke with Rita briefly, and quietly took a seat in the back of the classroom. As her next class entered the classroom, they quietly prepared for their weekly spelling test. No instructions were given, as Rita began calling out spelling words; no sentences were given. As she called the last word, several students raised their hands and called out numbers. Rita repeated particular words for those students. She then asked a student to pick up the papers from the last student on each row and place them on the teacher's desk. Classroom routines were clearly set and adhered to.

Next, Rita went to the board and explained the mechanics of "parenthetical documentation" which they be using in their research papers. She discussed the rule and then gave an example; i.e., "...at the close of the war ("Hitler" 100)." It was obvious that they were familiar with referencing and that Rita was giving a mini-lesson.

One student from the back of the room raised his hand and commented, "I don't understand anything." Rita responded, "Were you here yesterday?"

His retort was, "I wasn't paying attention."

She commented, "Isn't that in your notes?"

He replied, "I didn't write anything."

Rita looked at him with a look of disgust and went on with her discussion. The boy chuckled, a little embarrassed.

Rita asked the class if everyone had completed their first drafts and reminded them to bring their computer print-outs on Monday. *Triumphs* was on their desks and Rita made reference to the class's reading of the "Upstairs Room."

Rita announced, "Remember to raise your hand in our discussion. I say that today and everyday, sometimes you get so caught up in the discussion that you blurt out." She then directed the class to the first question.

As the class began discussing, Rita brought in stories from her own life and asked the class if they ever felt the way the character in the story, Anne, felt. She constantly brought in real-life situations as they related to the story; i.e., feeling "closed in" or,

... imagine being unable to get out of bed for four months. I love sleeping late, like this morning, it was raining and I didn't want to get out of bed, but if you had to...had to stay in bed. That's a different story.

Several students commented about their own feelings and how Anne felt in the story. There was a connection between the story and their lives. Rita got students to respond by asking, "What do you think?"

Some students responded, some were attentive, some did not respond, but were attentive, and others did not react at all. When students responded out of turn, Rita quickly reminded them of the rule, "no speaking out of turn during class discussions." Rita tried to address every student in the class; however, some students spoke far more than others, and some spoke only once. Each student had researched a topic as part of this thematic unit on The "Holocaust." Rita directed the discussion eventually, asking each student what they had learned about their topic as it related to this very structured class discussion, which was based on the story "The Upstairs Room" from their textbook.

One of the questions was, "How did they know they were Jewish?" Rita stated "Well, if they looked at you; (pointing to one of her students who was an African-American male) they would know you were Black." Several students commented and giggled. Rita demanded "Excuse me....now you need to turn around young lady!" No one was offended; order was understood.

Rita remained in the front of the classroom and directed the discussion. She referred to her notes and addressed the topics that each student had researched; therefore, providing a class discussion filled with lots of pertinent information about the Holocaust and allowing each student to add to class discussion.

Rita asked, "Who read Anne Frank? Monday, we're going to begin reading 'The Diary of Anne Frank.' The student, who read the book Anne Frank, related what had happened to Anne, "she gets captured and put in a camp and dies." Rita added and explained more about Anne.

She then mentioned the film that was shown in class as one student discussed his topic, Churchill. Another student discussed the reasons German generals gave for committing war crimes, blaming them on Hitler. Rita asked "Do you think that was a valid excuse for the generals? Should they be excused because Hitler made them do it?" Rita brought in how we all are constantly blaming others

for the things we do wrong. She gave examples and many of the students also gave examples.

As students began to speak out of turn, Rita reminded them not to speak out of turn, "You're forgetting our rule; one person speaks at a time."

She reminded the class that on Monday they would work on their reports in class; however, "After Monday, don't ask me anything about papers." She also reminded the class to bring in their computer print-outs of their draft.

(Most of the students have computers at home.)

Rita continues to give spelling tests; "their scores on the CAT and the spellings I get on papers are awful. I feel I need to do something about spelling." I mentioned that I had read an article "10 Things They Never Told Us About Spelling" by Karl A. Matz, which was published in *The Education Digest* in 1994, on spelling and told her I would be happy to bring it to her. She responded, "Oh, thanks, that would be great!" This is indicative that Rita welcomes new ideas.

Rita commented about her frustration with being an English teacher.

I'm still struggling...especially language arts teachers...we're all still struggling with what we need to be doing, because our subject, much more than any subject, changes. Reading is just reading, whether you're reading out of books or off a computer screen; it's just reading, there's not a lot about that that changes. Everyone thinks our subject is the most boring subject. How do I make this interesting? What's out there that I can do to make a kid really

want to write and read. There's not as much hands-on stuff as there are in other subjects.

After the interview Rita mentioned that she does not do journals, because the kids just got tired of them and she got tired of reading "all that stuff, all those personal entries, pages and pages of it."

Student Responses

As I completed my observation of Rita's language arts class, I reminded her that I would like to interview a student. She agreed and asked which student I would like to interview. I responded that it was her choice. She asked Rob (the student who had commented about knowing nothing before) if he would give me an interview. She said we could remain in her classroom. As we began the interview, Rita began working in her classroom.

I had no predetermined questions, but focused on how he felt about reading and writing. Rob commented that he does not like to read, "It bores me." However, he has read about six or seven books this year. He remembers his parents reading to him as a child. He feels those books were more interesting than the books he is reading today. He feels kids should be taught how to read by someone reading to them all the time.

He also feels that writing is important to get ready for high school and college. He commented that he finds that the things done in language arts are interesting, especially the book projects.

Consistencies

Rita's responses on her questionnaire indicated that she was in the reader-based and integrated category. Rita was deliberate and serious about her questionnaire. I feel that her responses were in earnest.

Rita, throughout the observation, would have students bring meaning to the situation in the classroom by asking probing questions; i.e., "What do you think?" "Have you ever felt this way?" One of her responses on the questionnaire indicated that she feels that children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading. She indicated a desire "...to expose her students to a lot of things and to help them see that it fits into the whole scheme of things." As she called on students, Rita would not correct responses, but simply add to them and call on other students, indicating that particular responses may be partially correct.

Rita's use of the integrated unit "The Holocaust" indicated that she was consistent with her beliefs about comprehension being a joint product of the reader and the text and that activities in the classroom should prepare students to understand a certain text. Each student chose topics to explore the theme and each reported on what they had discovered in individual readings, as well as, readings from the reading basal.

Rita believes that children should receive many opportunities to read materials unrelated to specific school-learning tasks, because they learn best by reading widely. She allows students to choose library books to read during individualized reading time and share with the class.

Her reading evaluation is consistent with integrated instruction; she does not give formal reading tests, but rather alternative assessments in the form of book projects and share time. She also incorporates the writing process in class and grades on usage of mechanics and content.

Inconsistencies

Rita was inconsistent in some areas with regards to her category. In regards to source of meaning Rita relies on the basal as a base and adds other materials, such as trade books and films from the library. In the interview Rita viewed her role of teacher as that of facilitator; however, her actions during whole group class discussion was that of director of the lesson:

Remember to raise you hand in our discussion. I say that today and everyday. Sometimes you get so caught up in our discussions that you blurt out. We can't have a class discussion if everybody is talking at the same time.

During class time, she remained at the front of the classroom at her podium. Desks remained in five rows of six. Rita was in charge. She also sees her role as helping the students become better readers and writers, and

monitors their progress through skills she thinks they need to have. She incorporate diagramming in English class because the high school teachers have complained to her about the lack of knowledge of grammar that students possess upon entering high school.

Classroom activities consist of a balance of teacher-direction and student-direction. She directs what students are to learn and the students direct the books and stories through which they will learn these skills.

Rita was inconsistent with evaluation; integrated instruction does not indicate the teaching of spelling in its traditional form. Rita gave spelling lists on Monday and traditional spelling tests on Friday. She also administers formal grammar tests.

Reader-Based Implications for Instruction

These implications for instruction are used as a point of reference to determine consistencies and inconsistencies this participant's beliefs.

- (1) Teacher models and guides instruction.
- (2) Students use prior knowledge to aid in understanding.
- (3) Students use a variety of materials, especially full-length literature and their own stories.
- (4) Students take part in group work, long readings, open-ended questions, and journal writing.

- (5) Evaluation is informal, giving emphasis to alternative assessment, subjective tests, and allowing multiple interpretations.
- (6) Teachers spend a great deal of time developing strategies for effective reading.
- (7) Teachers concentrate on organization and structure of reading material.
- (8) Teachers concentrate on syntactic and vocabulary knowledge.
- (9) Teachers concentrate on developing background knowledge to encourage accurate prediction of upcoming meaning.

Table 4.3 Case 1: Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Reader-Based	Consistencies	Inconsistencies
Source of Meaning	students bring meaning to the text	We talk about topics before we write...	Let's talk about the questions at the end of the story.
Teacher's Role	models and guides the lessons	I like that new word...facilitator...to help them enjoy reading.	Teacher stands in front of room and controls discussion.
Student's Role	use prior knowledge to anticipate and confirm their understanding	"Don't speak out of turn. Remember only one person speaks at a time."	I follow the order of our English book, I pretty much follow the book.
Materials	variety of materials, including full-length literature, students' own stories	I allow them to read what they want to read, especially poems, short stories, and myths.	I do follow the English text. We use an old reading basal.

(table con'd.)

Activities	long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work	101 ways to respond to a book is how I evaluate reading. I give them 3 or 4 questions and they can pick from these.	I don't give them the list and tell them to choose. I limit them so they will all be working at the same place.
Evaluation	subjective tests, allowing multiple interpretations	I evaluate with book projects; they respond with what I'm asking then I feel they have read for understanding; they have learned. They have developed the skill I am looking for.	I do spelling tests because of CAT scores, so I began teaching it again.

Case 2
Reader-Based/Unified Language
Acquisition Participant

General Characteristics

Rose has been teaching for twenty-three years. She has a bachelors degree in education and several hours of graduate credit. Her graduate work was "stunted" by a professor who she claims was a racist. She found his blatant remarks about African-Americans intolerable. After her semester course was completed, she discussed these remarks with him. This experience with an "impossible" professor caused her to discontinue her graduate work. Upon deciding on a career, she stated in her interview:

In the beginning I was not sure what it was that I wanted to be, but my mother had placed in her mind that both of her children were going to be teachers. I think that probably came from, in this area, the only successful people, ah, role model in the African American community were teachers. So to her

we had to become teachers. I've been teaching for twenty-three years, and that was not my first choice, I had not decided that I wanted to be a teacher. Ah, I often wonder, what life would have been like if I had gone into one of my chosen professions.

Rose spoke at length about the career she should have chosen, acting. She spoke about her accomplishments in that field and that many people have told her that she should have gone into acting. She consequently compares teaching to acting: "I guess teaching is almost a daily performance."

Educational Setting

Rose teaches eighth grade language arts at Port Middle School. Her walls have several displays of student work; such as, short poems (foot prints silhouettes, "If I could change my name...") and a poster of the writing process. Her shelves contain magazines (National Geographic), dictionaries, Writer's Craft (the district's adopted textbook), and a few tradebooks. Her bulletin board focuses on "The First Step to Success."

As Rose taught she remained at the front of the classroom for the majority of the time. Her desk was located in the front of the classroom. Student desks were arranged in three rows of six desks facing the front and two rows on each side facing the center of the classroom.

Beliefs

Rose feels that children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading and that teachers should normally expect and encourage children to have different interpretations of a story. However, she also feels that teachers should normally give equal emphasis to instruction aimed at developing each knowledge source. She presumes that reading, writing, speaking, and listening are closely related learning tasks. Also, that some children learn to read best by reading widely and often; others learn best through direct instruction. However, she feels that children learn to read best, when the task is broken down into specific skills to be taught by the teacher.

Practices

Interview

When asked what determines what she teaches and the materials she uses in her classroom, Rose responded:

I start off with novels, a free reading choice, where we don't assign and don't have to cover certain stories, as we had done in the old days. So the kids are encouraged to read modern literature and things that are fun for them to read. I start off with S. E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*. The age is right; they want to think they're tough like the Greasers and the Socs. Once I begin reading, my acting comes into that. I'm reading, but I'm acting at the same time. Then I tell them to read the next chapter to yourself. And then every other chapter I'm here keeping the book alive. With my eighth graders I get them started with *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

She comments that she alternates with recent children's literature and the classics and so the children "...don't realize I'm getting in some of the things they really ought to have."

Her opinions about grammar are very concrete. You know I really believe in grammar. I want them to know all of the parts of speech. I want them to be able to tell me the form, the function, and the position of the words in a sentence. And I do it from my basic to my honors classes, because a noun in a basic class is a noun in an honors' class.

I asked her about the basal and her use of the basal.

No, we don't anymore. As a matter of fact, I'm going to say it if it's O.K., we had been doing whole language. Some people in this area went whole language overboard, just novels, novels, and writing. I've never given up my grammar, because the standardized tests didn't go whole language. So I certainly was not going to leave those kids high and dry. I try to do it all. We need a good balance.

Rose mentioned how she relates every story to modern life by discussing the moral or theme of the story. She says this is also her way of having them "become higher-level thinkers."

I asked Rose to speak about evaluating her students.

I evaluate my students usually by giving them exams. I do take-home tests, which is really homework, where they get the sentences out of the book, which apply to the lesson I had that day. I like for them to know from their assignments. The major tests will come from the textbooks. I tell them a hundred points from a major exam or a hundred points from a homework assignment will be the same thing. So it takes the pressure off of them. I don't see the

grading as important. Some may say kids may get help on the homework assignment. That's not my problem. I'm not the teacher police. I do the objective tests with my grammar and the essay tests with my novels.

Rose responds to her students developing reading skills in her classroom and her idea of her role as teacher.

Only to create the desire in the child to want to read and to enjoy reading. Students can't enjoy novels if they are approached as if they were textbooks. If they are going to have tests on them. Put all that stress aside. I say that we're going to have periodic check-ups. When I say we're going to have pop quiz on characters, the students say "O.K." The stand back and enjoyed it; they got to meet the characters. There's a difference.

Observation

Rose was ending her duty in the cafeteria and walking back to her classroom as I arrived at her school. She graciously asked if there was any special place that I would like to sit and pointed to a chair in the rear of the classroom. The classroom is very large and is very neatly maintained. She apologized that today was a short schedule and that another class would be coming in, instead of the class she had wanted me to observe. I told her that that was fine with me if it was O.K. with her. She said it didn't matter.

Her class walked in talking quietly and wondering who I was. Rose told several students, "Hi!" and waited for someone to respond. She then mentioned "No one asked me

how I was doing." The class enters. She introduced me to the class.

This class was her drama class and is made up of eleven students. The focus of today's lesson is "Feelings" and her method of delivery is guided imagery. She began the class by discussing feelings and how sometimes the stress of everyday life is almost unbearable. She then played some relaxing music with ocean waves and wind, turned off the lights, closed the blinds, and the class followed the relaxation techniques which are narrated on tape. Rose modeled the instructions on the tape. The tape continued until the class is over. The class periods are shortened because of club meetings.

The next class entered and Rose began talking about the narrative booklets they are making. She then discussed the next booklet they would be making, a descriptive writing project involving the five senses. Students were instructed to cut pictures out of magazines or draw the pictures. Students listened attentively and asked questions. She went through each of the senses and gave examples. Students began talking and Rose commented, "Too much talking, I'm going to quit. I'm going to quit." She then went to her desk and put her head down.

One student commented, "Oh, oh, ya'll made her mad. We're sorry, Mrs. Darby." I remembered Rose saying in her

interview that teaching was a daily performance. Rose picked up her head and began speaking about another project they would be working on, "Future Trip to Mars." It will be a collage. She then suggested "These are the things, I would like you to talk about." She then listed the points on the board, as follows: home, family, hobbies, sports, pets, dress, toys, environment, atmosphere, landscape, and occupations. These collages would be due on Friday as each student would share their project with the class. That day was Monday.

Activities that she incorporates in her class are review of the previous day's closure "...just to carry it on one more day and to make a connection." Sometimes it is necessary to have a mini-lesson, if students do not understand the review. Following this activity, Rose provides a connection to today's work. Then she addresses her "full-fledged lesson" as the next step. This is followed by examples on the board. At the end of each class, Rose has a closure activity to review material before students leave her classroom.

Student Responses

At the end of my observation, I asked Rose if I could interview one of her students. She said, "Of course." She looked around and told one of her students to come with me.

I told her that I would like to interview her about reading and writing in the middle school as we walked to the library.

Beth discussed the approach in language arts toward reading and writing. She mentioned that sometimes skits and plays were presented from the books that were read in class. Also, periodically on Fridays, a test is given on the chapters or stories that were read from the basal.

She commented that, "At the beginning of the year, we did lots of writing and conferencing in class. As the year went on we spent less time on the writing process and more time at home finishing our work."

As we were completing the interview another student approached us. Kathy said that Rose thought perhaps I would like to interview another student. I did. She said that Rose was a very good teacher. She discussed the teaching of grammar in Rose's class. Parts of speech are discussed each day with homework assigned each night. Reading is graded by book reports, with emphasis on grammar. Sometimes students choose books; sometimes the books are chosen by the teacher. Each Friday the class has sustained silent reading. They commented (giggling) that last year all they did was book reports, because the teacher was doing "whole language."

Consistencies

Rose was categorized as reader-based/unified language acquisition. Criteria for reader-based implications for instruction as listed on pages 73-74 were used as a point of reference for comparison. Also, interactive implications are included below; interactive beliefs are indicative of a unified instructional philosophy. This category in its description is a contradiction in beliefs and practices. Her beliefs indicate that reading takes place in a holistic context; however, the unified language acquisition category indicates that she feels instruction of reading should be with a mixture of holistic and direct instructional activities.

Consistent with reader-based and holistic beliefs and practices is Rose's inclusion of the four language skills. She incorporates a large amount of speaking and listening activities through book and writing projects. She believes that children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading and that teachers should normally expect and encourage children to have different interpretations of a story. She mentioned that she sometimes will tell her students a story, which has a moral, and then will ask them to give their interpretation of what they would have done in that particular story.

She chose one interactive statement which focused upon equal emphasis on knowledge sources. This included attention to skills. This may explain her attention and focus on grammar.

She feels that children learn best when they read widely and often; others learn best through direct instruction. This is consistent with her work on grammar in usage and grammar in mini-lessons each day with homework each night. Her reaction to this interactive statement may also explain her practice of reading books to students, then having them read several chapters of the same book, followed by a test on those chapters.

Inconsistencies

Rose is a participant in the reader-based/unified acquisition category; therefore, she exhibits a form of contradiction between beliefs and practices. She postulates reading as learned in a reader-based, holistic fashion; however, she believes it should be taught in a unified acquisition framework.

Rose chose one specific skills statement which was that children learn to read best, when the task is broken down into specific skills to be taught by the teacher. This is consistent with Rose's teaching and "...not giving up my grammar" and emphasizing forms and functions of each part of speech; however, an interactive view would not

reflect mastery to the degree that it is expected in Rose's classroom.

Rose remained in the front of the class and was in control of the "discussion." This is inconsistent with her beliefs that all knowledge sources are equally important in a story and that the teacher should model and guide the lesson.

Table 4.4 Case 2: Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Reader-Based	Consistences	Inconsistences
Source of Meaning	students bring meaning to the text	I'll tell stories to children and they'll develop their own moral to the stories.	Teacher leads discussion and does not readily accept answers, until answers satisfy her interpretation.
Teacher's Role	models and guides the lessons	I'll say this is how the next part of speech fits in or relates.	Teacher stands in front of room and controls discussion.
Student's Role	use prior knowledge to anticipate and confirm their understanding	I have them ask questions if they don't understand; if necessary I'll give mini-lesson.	
Materials	variety of materials, including full-length literature, students' own stories	I start off with novels and a free reading choice. Especially successful with non-readers.	I give exercises from the textbook.
Activities	long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work	We don't use the basals anymore.	I really believe in grammar. I want them to know all the parts of speech.
Evaluation	subjective tests, allowing multiple interpretations	I do my essay test with novels.	I evaluate my students by usually giving exams from their textbooks. I do objective test with grammar.

Cross-Case Analysis

The two participants in this chapter were Rita, who always wanted to be a teacher, and Rose, a very confident veteran of twenty-three years, who aspired to be an actress. Both, reader-based teachers, stood in the front of the class and controlled the discussion; relied on the text and the teacher as the authority; followed the English text; gave formal English tests; and felt compelled to teach isolated skills as preparation for high school.

Both of these teachers also engaged in lots of teacher talk before reading and writing assignments and allowed individualized reading to gain reading skills that they felt students needed. Rita evaluated reading informally with book projects and Rose evaluated with formal essay test. Rita used a basal reader; Rose did not. Rita conducted spelling in a traditional manner; I was not aware if Rose conducted spelling.

A gap between beliefs and practices was evident in both of the reader-based participants. The reasons for this gap, I speculate, are entrenched in subjective experiences of accommodation, to experience a "goodness of fit" in an environment that they feel they must control, as a result of "inertia of tradition."

CHAPTER V
PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDIES
INTERACTIVE GROUP

Case study participants in this group view reading as both text-driven and student-centered; a joint product of the reader and the text. Also, if children are weak in one knowledge source important to the comprehension process, it is still possible for them to read and comprehend. In the interactive category teachers feel that some children learn best by reading widely and often; others learn best through direct instruction. Less proficient readers often benefit from more direct and structured learning experiences; therefore, it is important to individualize reading instruction as much as possible.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, I asked each participant to tell me a little about themselves. Each of the participants mentioned what they wanted to become as a professional. I found it interesting that some have always wanted to become a teacher and some did not. Did this childhood dream to become a teacher for some of the participants act as a determiner of effectiveness? All but two of the participants "...have always known (they) wanted to be a teacher."

Table 5.1 illustrates the categories created by the participants in this study.

Table 5.1 Categories of Participants

	Reader-Based	Interactive	Text-Based
Integrated Language	Case 1 Rita	Case 3 Ina	Case 6 Tonya
Unified Language	Case 2 Rose	Case 4 Ivan	Case 7 Tess
Mastery of Specific Skills	0	Case 5 Ida	0

The following table illustrates information about participant which may indicate individual differences which may add to understanding the subjectivity of the participants.

Table 5.2 Interactive Participants

Category	Participant	Yrs.	Aspire	Education
Interactive/ Integrated Language Acquisition	Case 3 Ina	23	Teacher	Bachelor of Arts Masters/Ad ministra- tion Reading Specialist
Interactive/ Unified Language Acquisition	Case 4 Ivan	5	Teacher	Bachelor of Arts English/So cial Studies
Interactive/ Specific Skills Mastery	Case 5 Ida	5	Teacher	Bachelor of Arts English

Case 3

Interactive/Integrated Language
Acquisition ParticipantGeneral Characteristics

Ina has twenty-three years of experience. Her undergraduate training has been in secondary English and business. She began teaching middle school because this was the only job she could find, but ultimately "...loved it and stayed there." She has a Masters in Administration and Supervision, an English minor, and a Reading Specialist. She had been in a Chapter 1 reading lab for ten years, but recently she decided that she "...was ready for a change and the whole language program was just getting geared up in the parish and I wanted to be a part of it." She is also certified to be a supervisor, principal, and assistant-principal, but states that she has "...no desire to be an administrator at a school. I just can't read enough professionally, books, magazines, journals."

Educational Setting

Ina teaches at Charles Middle School, which is a Chapter 1 school serving an at-risk population. Ina's classroom was very neat with lots of tradebooks on the shelves and with desks facing the center of the classroom from three different directions. Interestingly, she had her teaching certificate displayed, and mentioned that

doctors and lawyers do this, so why not teachers. Also, in the room were posters representing Accelerated Reader, Proofreading, the School Discipline Plan, and the parts of speech. Her bulletin board titled "Young Writers" displayed student poetry.

Beliefs

Ina feels that children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading. She agrees with the statement that teachers should normally expect and encourage children to have different interpretations of a story. However, she believes that children who are weak at word recognition skills, usually cannot overcome this weakness with strengths at other levels of the comprehension process. She perceives that a variety of strategies are necessary for readers as they read--from sounding out unfamiliar words to guessing familiar words in rich context.

Regarding instruction, Ina feels children should receive many opportunities to read materials unrelated to specific school-learning tasks. She considers reading, writing, speaking, and listening as closely related learning tasks. She supports the idea that children should be frequently read to, while they are young so they acquire a "feel" for what reading is like. In fact, opportunities should be created in the classroom to provide children with

a reason to read. It is important to individualize reading instruction, as much as possible, by taking into consideration the children's reading abilities.

Practices

Interview

Regarding her choice of instructional materials, Ina makes use of the state language arts curriculum guide.

"...that determines the skills that I teach. The type of class that I have determines what I teach. If I have an advanced class, the kids come to me with some skills mastered. If I have a basic class those kids need to be taught skills that the advanced class does not need to have. The materials I use will depend on the ability of the students. This will determine the trade books on their level.

The Accelerated Reader is used to encourage students to read books on a higher level in order to obtain the designated points for a particular six weeks. She assists those students who "hate" to read by finding books which relate to their interests "...then you sorta have them hooked...a lot is gearing them to what they like to read."

In order to become familiar with young literature, Ina "totally immersed" herself into it, so that she "...is able to discuss what happened in the books... " with her students.

In the two-hour block for our regular students, the class begins with students journalling, it gets them oriented into the class. Topics are given which relate to the types of writing. Next, students do sentence editing to bone up on their skills...two sentences are up on the screen and they volunteer to find errors in them.

She reads types of writing, i.e., persuasive, from past student writing, as well as essays from workbooks. Topics are explored for two or three class periods before students begin writing so that "...every student has a topic."

I start off the year with something a lot easier than this, but I feel like by the time they get to this point they are ready for some more serious work and they seem excited about it. They feel like they're pretty important if they are going to write about it. They keep saying, 'When will we write stories?' I tell them that they are not ready; that we are still working on fragments, run-ohs, and sentences. We are going to go on to quotation marks in the spring, and paragraphing of quotation marks and then you will be ready for stories, but you are not ready yet.

After papers are graded, Ina completes skill sheets for each class, "... so if Mary has made errors on fragments or run-ohs, I'll put a little check in that column and the next time I grade a paper I'll see if she has corrected that." Attention to these mistakes are also the focus of teacher-student conferences. Writing assignments that she has covered are "... three poetry units, one descriptive piece of writing, written about a person in their life, a letter to an author and one to their pen pal, and a business letter."

Periodically, all students follow along as Ina reads. She mentioned that, her "...students really like that...they all volunteered to read, and I thought I would have to do most of the reading, but they all wanted to

read." Another activity Ina employs is "...literature circles, as the students get into groups and discuss different aspects of a story." However, now she feels "...they are not quite disciplined to do that yet. So we just get some general ideas together by discussing the book."

Silent reading is an activity done on Monday and Wednesday for approximately twenty minutes. Ina feels that "...twenty minutes is about the most that they can handle of silent reading." Reading response in journals was an activity Ina felt was necessary to assist students reverting to the traditional tell-what-the-story-was-about. Other activities Ina utilizes are videos, skits, and lots of publishing in the classroom and in newspapers and magazines.

Accelerated Reader is used "...as a grade tool."

I set the standards pretty low, ... if they earn fifteen points in one six weeks, they get one hundred in the grade book. If they earn one or two points they get fifty-five or sixty. So that I am encouraging that they won't fail. She also allows them to take tests on the books she reads to the class so that low achievers can take a test and feel good about themselves, because they can pass that test, too.

She also gives a participation grade. During the sentence editing activity she says:

I stand with my clipboard in my hand giving little marks for participation... class participation, bringing books to class, doing their work, silent reading, and those kinds of things. They also share their journal entries, which is participation. That

form is given to students twice a six weeks to sign and know where they can improve. Once or twice a six weeks to ensure carry-over at home, students are given homework assignments.

She commented that only about half of the students will do that.

Vocabulary quizzes are given on vocabulary lessons that correlate to the vocabulary of a book the class is reading, or a writing activity. These quizes are given every few weeks depending on class time. I grade all their writing. Usually, grades in an average class fall at the "B" or "C" levels. It's very hard for them to make an "F" on an activity.

Ina feels her role is to "...get them interested in reading, to read, to encourage them to read, to challenge themselves to read a little more difficult books and to get them to share their good books with friends... ." Ina feels it is important to explain why students learn differently and why teachers teach differently. She explains why some students enjoy listening and some enjoy reading the book themselves.

I don't like anybody to read to me, give me the book, let me read it. And that means you are a visual learner. I explain that to them and they understand. Through these types of discussions, students realize that we all learn differently and that is important.

Ina mentioned that she was in the lab for ten years.

We taught skills to death. And their skills were not that much better when the California Achievement Tests came out. I feel improvement in skills will come ... the more they read. Reading is a difficult process, and being a secondary major, I don't know that much about how a child learns to read. I taught vocabulary

skills in isolation and sentence context ... but it is not nearly as powerful as your reading a novel and talking about the words you don't know. So I think reading skills are very difficult to teach in isolation.

Observation

As I arrived in Ina's classroom, I was impressed with the neatness of her classroom and the importance she placed on being a teacher. Her love of teaching was obvious in her presentation to her students, as well as, in speaking of her students and her profession.

Her sixth-grade students had just received their report cards and Ina began the class by asking how many had made honor roll. This was an advanced class and nearly all students raised their hands. "Wonderful," she congratulated, "I have a smart class!"

Ina stood in the front of the class as she asked students to complete their journals, reminding them to get out their "said list" and write three sentences in their journals. Everything Ina did was deliberate. She also reminded her students to use quotations in their sentences, using a word from the list in each sentence.

Ina walked around the room with a clipboard asking students to give their sentences. She used positive reinforcement for each response and quickly placed participation marks on her clipboard.

Next, Ina presented a writing assignment. On the overhead projector, Ina placed a poem, "If I Were in Charge

of the World" by Judith Versed and read it to the class. After this she modeled a poem that she had written by substituting various phrases and creating another poem. The class applauded. Next, she announced today's assignment, which was writing poems and editing in pairs. She reviewed the editing process before the class began writing their own poems.

I was sitting in the rear of the classroom near the bulletin board, which displayed other student poems. A student came casually to the bulletin board and bowed to the class as he announced, "Man, I got to admire my work of art." Ina turned to him, smiled slightly, and began walking among the students and asking who needed help.

At the end of the first half of the two-hour block, the students were allowed to get a drink of water. As the students left, Ina straightened the desks that were placed in groups. Although they remained in groups, now they were "neatly" placed in groups.

I asked Ina how groups are chosen. She responded, "Oh, I let them choose. I like to work with my friends." She said that this was her best-behaved group. "It's so much fun to teach these kids," she said. Her afternoon kids are poorly disciplined. She expressed, "I don't know what to do; I've done everything." As we spoke, the students returned and walked very comfortably getting

writing materials from boxes on the back tables and returning to their writing tasks.

Ina has empowered this class and therefore has no discipline problems. Several students asked if they could continue working on their poems. Ina reminded them that they usually have sustained silent reading on Fridays. The class persisted. Ina agreed and allowed them to complete the editing. She also announced that they will be allowed to continue working because they have done such a great job of working together and editing.

Student Responses

Ina allowed me to interview one of her students. She told me to pick anyone; I insisted that she select the student. Freeman, a sixth grader, was obviously very bright and respected Ina enormously. He was soft-spoken and shy. He was deliberate and careful in his comments concerning Ina.

We do better work this way than last year. When we conference I can understand it a lot better. I like this class better than reading out of a language book or workbook. If I had a teacher like Ms. Hart in every class, I would probably make straight "A's" in every class. Yeah, I like Ms. Hart; she's a nice teacher.

Consistencies

Ina is in the interactive/unified language acquisition category. The interactive explanation about how reading takes place and the implied practices are compatible with

the unified language acquisition practices. The following list of classroom implications will provide guidelines for comparison.

Ina feels children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading. This accounts for her modeling poetry and asking her students to give their opinions through their own poetry. Also, Ina reads different types of writing and allows students to explore topics before they begin their writing so that "every student has a topic."

She perceives that a variety of strategies are necessary for readers as they read. Ina takes advantage of editing to help students "bone up on their skills." Ina also utilizes videos, skits, and lots of publishing in the classroom.

Interactive instruction does not place a major emphasis on skill drills. Ina remembers that in lab she "taught skills to death and their skills were not that much better." She furthers skill improvement through reading; she posits that reading is more powerful than skills in isolation.

She walked around the classroom assisting students who apparently needed her help, assisting students who were less proficient. As in integrated instruction, Ina

constantly conferences with students, but paid special attention to mistakes that had been made in student writing which she felt needed some teacher direction.

Inconsistencies

I observed a tension between Ina's beliefs and practices. She incorporated group work, mini lessons, process writing, and other integrated language activities; however, as students were dismissed for a five-minute recess, she immediately began rearranging desks which were out of original order. She also continually quieted students who spoke out of turn and seemed uneasy about the noise level at times. This may be due to her over conscientiousness during observation or perhaps to a tension between her need for classroom structure and her belief in integrated teaching. Is the fact that Ina is in this interactive/unified language acquisition category the cause of her exhibiting tension observed or is the cause her desire to be more holistic and her need for order and structure?

Interactive Implications for the Classroom

The following implications were used to compare beliefs with classroom strategies.

- (1) Teacher directs instruction, but plans for individual differences.
- (2) Student uses a variety of reading strategies to

develop both text information and personal knowledge to arrive at meaning.

- (3) Students use a variety of reading materials including worksheets.
- (4) Students take part in a variety of activities including whole group and group activities, independent and teacher-assisted work, and authentic as well as worksheet activities.
- (5) Evaluation is both formal and informal, including objective and subjective testing, usually on the literal and inferential levels.
- (6) Teacher gives equal attention to all components of comprehension.
- (7) It is important to consider students' differing abilities when selecting and using text materials.
- (8) Teachers should spend more time working with less proficient readers, than with more proficient readers.

Table 5.3 Case 3: Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Interactive	Consistencies	Inconsistencies
Source of Meaning	students use both text and personal knowledge	In the Spring we do literature circles.	

(table con'd.)

Teacher's Role	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences	Basic kids need to be taught skills more.	
Student's Role	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	Materials I use are determined by the ability of the students... to read at their level.	
Materials	variety of reading materials, worksheets	I try to use visual things and get my kids to read as much as they can.	
Activities	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	We use trade books, novels on their level. I have read two novels to the students and they have read one on their own. I do journal writing.	
Evaluation	objective and subjective tests (usually literal-level and inferential-level questions)	I use Accelerated Readers as a grade tool. I use the writing process. We have vocabulary quizzes that I correlate to a book we're reading. I grade all their writing.	

Case 4

Interactive/Unified Language
Acquisition ParticipantGeneral Characteristics

Ivan teaches sixth grade language arts at an at-risk inner-city middle school in this school district. I asked Ivan to tell me a little about himself and how he had gotten to this point in his career.

Well, I graduated from high school, went to college and wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I had seen teachers and I felt that was a job I wanted to do. I majored in Education and taught for two or three years, but I was real young and other opportunities came along. I was frustrated with the classroom management and whatever. And I wanted to do some other things. I just came back to teaching three years ago. And so I went through a crisis and I wanted to get back into something I wanted to do; I didn't like what I was doing, so I quit and started teaching school. I came back and taught; I got a job in the resource room, teaching elementary school and because of my minor in English education, I was able to get a job teaching language and that is where I am now.

He does not have a masters degree and mentioned "I probably won't. I don't see the incentive to get a higher degree. Not money wise."

Educational Setting

Ivan teaches language arts at Lake Middle School, which houses grades fifth through eighth. He teaches three two-hour block sections of sixth grade regular language arts.

I arrived at Ivan's classroom at eight-thirty A.M. Students were exceedingly busy, taking advantage of the

last few minutes of socializing before class began. Ivan welcomed me and asked if there was anything that I needed. We chatted a few minutes then I asked where I should sit. He replied, "Anywhere, there's a desk in the back." One of the students asked if I was an uninvited guest. He chuckled and then said, "No, she's very welcomed. That's our journal topic."

Ivan had a list of the day's activities on the board:

1. Journal # 10
2. Adjective test
3. "An Uninvited Guest"
4. Oral reading
5. SSR

Ivan's classroom had lots of posters which encourage positive thinking about one-self. One poster, "As I Grow" by American Arts and Graphics, Inc. contained a sentence: "Tell me when you make mistakes and what you learned from them. Then I can accept that I am O.K., even when I blunder." There were many posters with this theme of affirming students in the classroom. There were two large bulletin boards, one with a calendar and one which was empty. There were approximately thirty tradebooks and ten dictionaries.

Beliefs

Ivan feels that children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading.

However, he feels that children who are weak at word recognition skills, usually cannot overcome this weakness with strengths at other levels of the comprehension process. He perceives the meaning of a text as usually a joint product of the reader and the text, that if children are weak in one knowledge source important to the comprehension process, it is still possible for them to read and comprehend, and that readers use a variety of strategies as they read--from sounding out unfamiliar words to guessing familiar words in rich context.

Ivan feels instructional decisions should carefully consider the nature and abilities of the children. He perceives less proficient readers often benefiting from more direct and structured learning experiences. It is important to individualize reading instruction, as much as possible, by taking into consideration the children's reading abilities. Finally, he believes that reading, writing, speaking, and listening are closely related learning tasks.

Practices

Interview

I asked Ivan what determines what he teaches and if he uses the basal.

That is difficult for me, because I have been out of school for a long time and I am kind of scraping around trying to figure out what to teach and how to teach, especially whole language, this brand new idea of

reading. So I try to get ideas from other teachers. No, I don't use the basal. I use trade books and they can check them out and bring them home. As soon as I saw the whole language approach, I really thought that it was a much better way to go. But I've changed, I've come back to using the basal every now and then, but primarily I don't use it because drilling the kids on skills, I don't think works well, because you can watch their eyes glaze over once you start talking about it and they just don't pay attention.

Each day students journal upon entering the class.

There is always a journal topic on the board. They are free to use any other topic they want to if they don't like the journal topic, but generally they use it. I offered them an open topic before, but most of them don't like that. They like something to write about. They don't want to have to think of something. So the general topic is put on the board; they journal for about ten minutes.

Ivan covers grammar in context.

Lately, I started using a sentence of the day. I put a sentence that is incorrect on the board and get some ideas about how it should be changed, what we have to do to fix it. So, we get together to fix it. They get competitive sometimes about what's right and what's wrong. So we do sentence writing, lately, I've used some worksheets on sentence structure, some basic stuff.

This is a whole-class activity, in which grammar is taught by students "fixing" the sentences. Ivan teaches a two-hour block of language or English, the first part of which is writing and grammar and the second part is reading.

Ivan includes writing process as a class activity.

I assigned the writing of different themes, with a story start-up, or just a title and have them write something about it in two or three pages. A lot of them could write that much, but they weren't doing very well in going back and trying to correct their stuff.

I didn't have time to read it all and correct that much. So, what I do is have them write about a half a page, so we can go back and edit it and correct it that way.

In the second portion of the language arts block, Ivan reads to his class for ten to fifteen minutes, followed by students reading in a sustained silent reading activity.

I read to them from one of the tradebooks for about ten to fifteen minutes and then we have sustained silent reading as they read their own books. I usually want them to read these award-winning books and I feel like we don't want to have comic books or things like that here, but some kids won't read anything, but that. And so I don't care what they read, so long as they have some kind of book to read; just so they read something. It can be a catalogue, comic book, magazine, I just say read something, and that's all they have to do.

Ivan evaluates informally in reading and English.

All I ask is that they read during silent reading and I give them points everyday, ten if they read and zero if they slept, if they talked, then less points. I don't have them turn in written work on what they have read, I feel like I can just observe whether or not they are actually reading. I don't think it encourages kids to read if they have to report on everything. I like to read and if I had to report on everything I read, I would read less, I'm sure. So, I evaluate them informally, by observation. And the value is based on participation. With whole language, if they work and turn in something they are going to get graded for it. And a lot of it is, did they put the effort into it, not did they get everything right, but did they try to find mistakes and correct them. So it is pretty easy to make good grades if they just participate.

Ivan sees his role, more as a facilitator than anything else." He feels he is "lacking some, as far as (his) education, because (he) hasn't been in school in a long time." In whole language Ivan says students "best

learn to read by reading and so (he) encourages them to read things on any grade level." He commented that he tried teaching "the old way" but didn't feel that he was reaching the kids. His thoughts about isolated skills teaching:

Once you break down language like that, than you never get it back together. They wonder why you broke it up in the first place...they know the words, nouns and pronouns, but they don't know the concepts, their understanding is very limited. By writing, reading, and correcting your writing, the kids learn more about what a sentence is supposed to be.

He is concerned about the amount of "Black slang" which is spoken by his students. He feels that it is hard to teach standard English. Also, he feels that "kids need to know standard English, because they are judged by how they speak and write and they can't go out into the world and get a job."

Observation

I arrived at Ivan's class at 8:30 A.M. as the class was entering to begin their school day. There were sixteen students in this sixth grade language arts class. The room was very large and the teacher's desk was in the rear of the classroom.

Ivan told students this would be journal number ten. This was obviously not a daily writing task. As students began writing in their journals, a student spoke out of turn. Ivan walked to the intercom and called the office.

A few minutes later, a lady entered the classroom and she and Ivan went into the hall. The student was asked to go into the hall to speak to them. While they were out of the class, the students began talking and walking around the classroom.

Ivan entered the classroom and distributed an adjective quiz. The Behavior Disorder teacher, the lady, assisted the student with his quiz. The students began talking as Ivan walked to the front of the classroom and blew a whistle softly and said, "Stop, look, and listen!" He then gave the directions for the quiz, then added, "Oh, by the way, your spelling words are on the board."

There was lots of talking and moving around; however, this did not seem to bother Ivan. He instructed the students that there were approximately twenty-five adjectives. Several students remarked that they had counted twenty words. Ivan counted and then responded, "Oh, yes, only twenty."

A girl and boy student began to argue. "Mr. Underwood, Joe says I threw his sister in the coulee."

Ivan responded, "O.K. let's get our work done."

I heard a faint whistle again. "O.K. let's listen."
He waited and then continued,

O.K. today we're going to write something. A page, I don't want more than a page. Our topic is 'An Uninvited Guest,' or any other ideas that you may have.

It can be about an animal, it doesn't have to be a person. O.K. you've got about a half hour. In a half hour, I want a story on my desk.

Ivan distributed a sheet of looseleaf paper and students were allowed to talk to the other people at their desks (desks were arranged in groups of four) about the writing assignment.

One student asked, "Mr. Underwood, how do you spell 'chihuahua'?"

Ivan responded, "Make it poodle; I know how to spell poodle. We'll look it up tomorrow. Just write what you think."

After approximately ten minutes, I noticed all students were writing their assigned essays. Ivan later announced, "Five more minutes."

One student remarked, "That's all we gotta do? That's all we gotta do?"

Ivan picked up the papers and placed them on his desk. The bell rang and Ivan blew his whistle. He sat on his desk, Indian style. "O.K. guys listen up."

He began reading from a Ramona book. He stopped and discussed words from the book, asking the students what they thought were the meanings of different words. As he read, he continually quieted students for talking or moving around the classroom. Some of the students went to the library to play computer games, other students went to the

library, one student read at his desk, one laid on the floor and read, and one went to the door and began throwing a candy up and down. Gradually, everyone began to read, but the majority of the time most of the students had not read. At the end of the period, Ivan assigned points in his grade book.

Ivan handed me an article from the paper about life in public schools. He seemed very concerned about the kids and their burdens which they bring to school.

Student Responses

Joey says his mom used to "...read to me every night when I was little. I liked that." He loves to read today and likes it when Mr. Dale reads to them. Joey says he's read about ten books since September; it was now January. Adventure stories are his favorite. "I like to listen to them and I like to read them." He mentioned that he's reading more books this year, because he's allowed to read in class.

When asked about spelling, Joey responded that on Monday they copy words from the board and on Friday they have a test. "He calls out the word, gives us a sentence, and then we write it down."

When asked about writing, Joey offered that each Monday they begin a paper, working each day on the paper, and then these papers are turned in on Friday.

Consistencies

In the unified language acquisition view the teacher directs the lesson, but plans for individual differences.

Ivan is consistent with this particular criteria in several ways; i.e., his journal and writing topics are voluntary, he allows students to choose their own choice of tradebooks, and during sustained silent reading he allows students to choose among several activities. Also, Ivan chose to facilitate instruction rather than to direct instruction; the choice of both of these roles would be characteristic of unified instruction. Ivan used a variety of strategies during his lesson; i.e., a worksheet, journal writing, individualized reading and writing, and read a loud. Ivan evaluates both formally and informally; i.e, spelling tests and participation of reading during sustained silent reading.

Inconsistencies

An interactive/unified instructor would include more direct instruction and pay more attention to specific skills and their mastery. Also this type of teacher would pay more attention to less proficient students, who need help with isolated skills improvement.

Table 5.4 Case 4: Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Interactive	Consistencies	Inconsistencies
Source of Meaning	students use both text and personal knowledge	I use the basal every now and then.	
Teacher's Role	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences		As for my role, I think more as a facilitator.
Student's Role	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	By writing, reading, and correcting your writing, they have learn more about what a sentence is supposed to be.	Kids learn best by reading.
Materials	variety of reading materials, worksheets	Lately, I've used some work sheets on sentence structure--some basic stuff.	
Activities	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	Yes, I use trade books and they are there for kids to check out. I have journal writing. I give worksheets for grammar skills.	
Evaluation	objective and subjective tests		I just give points for reading. I evaluate informally by observation.

Case 5

Interactive/Mastery of Specific
Skills ParticipantGeneral Characteristics

Ida has been teaching for two years at Mill Middle School. Before this teaching assignment, she taught at an all-Black parochial school in the district for several years "until it closed." She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Education. She is not married, has no children, and lives at home with her parents.

Educational Setting

I arrived to observe at 1:25 P.M. Ida was sitting at her desk working, and I could not help noticing the unusually quiet atmosphere in her classroom. Students were speaking as they waited for the bell; however, very softly. She lifted her head and reminded the class to "remember to read for your twenty minutes and finish your sentences." Twenty minutes of reading was a standard class assignment.

Ida teaches in this at-risk inner-city school. Her classroom is very neat with five rows of six desks facing the front of the classroom and the teacher's desk. The walls are sparsely decorated with several displays and posters of commercial educational slogans. The title of her bulletin board is "Get into Some Heavy Reading" with three book silhouettes titled "Current Events," "Discover," and "History." Another bulletin board had a calendar. On the front wall Ida had two teacher-made posters entitled

"Reader of the Month" and "Writer of the Month" with students' names printed on them.

An objective was written on the blackboard to the left of the classroom beginning with the letters "TLW" which stood for "The learner will." The objective was, "TLW review adjectives so that he/she may write more effectively when describing objects, people, places, etc." Beneath the objective, Ida had written the definition of the word "adjective."

The journal topic on the board was related to the part of speech, "Describe how being blind would change your life."

Spelling words for the week were on the board. These also related to the part of speech being discussed.

Beliefs

Ida believes that children's knowledge of the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading. She perceives the meaning of text as usually a joint product of reader and text. If children are weak in one knowledge source important to the comprehension process, Ida believes that it is still possible for them to read and comprehend. She feels that readers use a variety of strategies as they read--from sounding out unfamiliar words to guessing familiar words in rich context. She also feels that teachers should give equal emphasis to instruction aimed at developing each knowledge source.

She considers it important for teachers to provide very clear, precise presentations during reading instruction. Teachers should have a list of separate reading skills appropriate for their grade level and make certain that each student masters these skills, and only these skills. However, in deciding how to teach reading, Ida posits that one should carefully consider the nature and abilities of the children. Another position Ida takes is that opportunities should be created in the classroom to provide children with a reason to read. Finally, she feels that it is important to individualize reading instruction, as much as possible, by taking into consideration the children's reading abilities.

Practices

Interview

Ida comments about the criteria that determines what she teaches.

Generally, what I teach is based on the curriculum guide and also the students in my group. If I have plans for something, and before I actually get into it, we try to plan what the present knowledge, is and depending on what the present knowledge is...determines what actually or how in depth I will take that. It is always on their level.

When asked about her use of the basal, she responded:

Yes, I do at times. If I have someone who doesn't like to read at all, I won't say you have to read this book. I get them reading first, and once I get them

interested in reading, then I gradually introduce different types and what not. But I figure, if they don't want to read to start with, it's just making it worse; so it's whatever they want to read.

Tradebooks are also required reading for Ida's classes.

I require them to read 2 to 3 (tradebooks) per six weeks. Now some read from 3 to 5. The norm is 2-3. They have at least two weeks to read one. No pressure.

Ida was asked to talk about the activities in her language arts classes each day.

It begins with a journal entry, sometimes a topic that is given or sometimes they choose whatever they want to write about. Then there is time for sharing or discussion. There's input back and forth. And then we move to whatever is planned for the day. Normally, certain days are set aside for reading and working on vocabulary folders, going over words and meanings in the readings, asking questions about the book. Sometimes I read a book and pull general topics from that book, then next I'll review and ask them to predict what will happen. Every day there is some kind of writing involved.

As Ida spoke about her activities, I asked her about skills.

There's always some type of language skill. If I plan a language skill, like let's discuss nouns...in the course of reading a journal and I hear someone say something that's incorrect then I'll disregard the planned lesson for that day and we'll take care of that at that point. My objective is always on the board so they know what is expected for the day, so it is no surprise.

If I have a student who is having a skill that needs to be developed, I try to group them as best I can and get them all on one level ... and tell the others who don't need help to do what they need to do.

If I know someone needs help, then I give them individual help, I'll spend more time with them, give

them extra work with reading skills, use different exercises that deal with comprehension.

If they can read hardly at all, then if you read to them then they will understand. I'm not going to say, 'You go home and you learn to read.' I'll help that child. Sometimes you have to start them low and then it is easy and what you're doing is you're building their reading skills.

As far as vocabulary is concerned, it's when they are reading, they have a folder and they write down the word that they don't know and then define that word and use it in a sentence. And then I'll go back from time-to-time and say, 'What does that word mean?' And they remember, because they've had to use it right in a sentence, they had to look it up. By doing it themselves they learn. I give them words they should know by the time they leave sixth grade. I also give them incentives. If they use a vocabulary word in a sentence, then they get a candy or whatever. I try to get them to use it in daily conversation. Every week I give them at least twenty words and they write sentences with each. If they have problems with the meanings, they must write the definitions. They are doing quite well, so far.

Ida responded to her role as teacher.

I don't know. I see myself as someone who is there to help them to better themselves and to keep their self-esteem up. If you have a question or a problem come talk to me. Tell me and I will understand. Family problems, anything. I see myself as a positive role model, as best I can help them in that sense, as well as their education.

I also asked Ida how she felt about evaluation.

I evaluate my students formally (by asking) O.K. what's the answer to whatever, and then she will answer orally and then I'll check everyone that way, individually. I'll give them a reason for a grade and then I'll evaluate them that way. If I see or know that some are having trouble with reading some words, then I'll read the question to that person. I do written test, oral test, problems, words...some are good at drawing...so sometimes with the books they read, I'll tell them to draw a page from the book and explain what's going on in there. They make masks of a main character in their book and they have to do a little scene or they do a

monologue or something the character did. They love it; they enjoy it. They had to wear their mask; they enjoyed it, because you had to know your character. They had to know their scene.

Observation

As Ida's class came into the classroom, they quietly, speaking occasionally, took their seats. After reminding them several times to take care of their journals, Ida attended to one student whom she mentioned, "needs attention everyday." Ida walked to Jennifer and remarked, "I'll count to three. Write or you go. You're talking entirely too much." The student smiled and began to work. Ida announced, as she wrote in her roll book (participation comment for Jennifer), that there will no longer be flexible library hours. Classes will be assigned.

Ida walked around the classroom and stood next to some who did not write in their journals, "Come on you're wasting time that you will make-up for after 3:20." Dismissal is at 3:20.

As students finished their journals, Ida asked someone to share. One girl, Sharon, shared. As she finished, Ida asked, "What's wrong with that?" Then Ida went on to discuss adjective misuse in Sharon's journal.

Next, Ida picked up homework. The homework assignment due each Friday was the parent signature sheet indicating that students have read for twenty minutes each day. One

student assignment was turned in to Ida. There were six students in Ida's class.

The next activity was SSR (Sustained Silent Reading). Ida reminded the students, "Remember this time is for reading, not staring, writing, or walking. Read for fifteen minutes and I'll read. Remember your reading logs and remember to put the date and write a summary of what you've read." Ida had to attend to several students who did not have a book. She got a book off the shelf and handed them books, quietly. After twenty minutes, all students were reading. As they read, students entered vocabulary words and sentences into their vocabulary folders. Verna had problems getting back to work after she entered one of her vocabulary words. Ida sat next to her and they took turns reading to each other. Ida demonstrated how to do the reading log. Verna began working independently. Ida went to each student asking if they needed assistance, then sat beside them and had them read aloud to her.

The bell rang and the remainder of the class (eight students) came in from reading lab. Ida reminded them to get their journal and not to disturb those students who were reading. Students began talking and disturbing those who were reading. Ida asserted, "Some of you are losing

it. If you were doing what you were supposed to be doing, we would not have this unnecessary talking."

After students had finished journalling, she asked everyone to focus their attention on the spelling words on the board. "Do you notice something common? If you do, write it on a piece of paper and pass it up." All papers were collected and Ida congratulated students who had responded correctly. Words were copied and the test would be on Friday. The final activity was an objective, fill-in-the-blank quiz on adjectives.

Student Responses

Shatonya's favorite subject is language arts.

We learn certain things, like about adjectives, linking verbs, and stuff like we're supposed to have. We don't do workbooks, but we do sheets that she runs-off. I always did like writing. Sometimes when I'm bored, my little sister and I, all we do is write. Things like a paragraph about how I feel, if I'm feeling bad; I write about that. I have a journal at home. I like when the teacher lets us pick out a book and we can read anything. So far I've read thirteen books.

I asked Shatonya if she felt reading was important.

If a science teacher asked you a question, you would know the answer because you read the book. Some students never know the answer, because they never read. If they would read, they would find out the answers.

Consistencies

Ida is the interactive/mastery of specific skills Participant, that is she believes children read from text

in an interactive fashion, but learning should be developed in a text-based fashion. Ida believes that the student's knowledge of the world directly influences their comprehension in reading; this accounts for her allowing students to select their reading material and share their readings and discuss possible predictions or solutions to problems in the book. In this category, a teacher would emphasize vocabulary to assist in decoding the text, which is consistent with Ida's strategy of having students find words in their respective tradebooks, define them and use them in a sentence.

Text-based implications would include basal and worksheet use; Ida comments that she uses the basal at times; however, the students read trade books also. Ida gives formal evaluations, such as spelling and grammar tests. Just as in this category, Ida directs the discussion and indicates the correctness.

Inconsistencies

Unlike this category, Ida allows students to journal and share their opinions in reading and writing workshop-type activities. Student desks remain in five rows of six similar to text-based instructional settings; however, an interactive classroom would include interaction and small group work at times. This was not evident in this classroom.

Text-Based Implications for the Classroom

The following list of implications were used to compare beliefs with strategies taught from a text-based perspective, which would implicate mastery of specific skills teaching.

- (1) Teacher and text are the authority, she/he directs the instruction and indicates the correctness of student response.
- (2) Student learns through isolated practice of individual skills with short, unrelated text.
- (3) Activities include short readings, skill drills, and independent work.
- (4) Evaluation is formal with objective tests requiring one correct answer.
- (5) Basal and worksheet use is predominant.
- (6) Vocabulary receives emphasis to assist in decoding of text.
- (7) Reading is translation of author's intended message; therefore, there is one correct meaning accepted.
- (8) Emphasis is on decoding of text and literal interpretations.

Table 5.5 Case 5: Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Interactive	Consistences	Inconsistences
Source of Meaning	students use both text and personal knowledge	...we try to plan what the prior knowledge is. Yes, I use the text at times.	
Teacher's Role	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences	If I feel someone needs help I give them individual help.	
Student's Role	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	I have a bunch of things they can do on their own that will help them improve their reading skills. They have vocabulary folders to write down words they come across and don't know.	
Materials	variety of reading materials, worksheets	What I teach is based on the curriculum guide and also the students I teach.	
Activities	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	Every day there is some type of writing involved. There is always some type of language skill.	
Evaluation	objective/subjective tests		Testing is oral and very subjective. They may draw a scene from the book.

Cross-Case Analysis

These participants showed the least number of inconsistencies. Ina, who always wanted to be a teacher, had no inconsistencies. Ivan, who always wanted to be a teacher, feels his role as teacher is facilitator; he does not engage in direct discussion; and he grades simply by participation in reading. Ida, who always wanted to be a teacher, evaluated reading orally and subjectively and her students do process writing with their own self-selected topics.

Ina believes basic kids need to be taught skills more; therefore, the ability of her students determines the materials she used. She used a variety of strategies; i.e., journalling, individualized reading, writing process, and vocabulary quizzes. Ivan used the basal along with other materials. He taught grammar in context, but also used worksheets and the English text. Ida used lots of teacher talk and incorporated the required text and curriculum guide depending on the ability of her students. Her students wrote in class each day.

Ivan displayed a tension between his beliefs and practices, which I speculate are due to the interruption in his career. However, Ina and Ida felt comfortable and followed their pedagogical beliefs with an air of confidence.

CHAPTER VI

PRESENTATION OF CASE STUDIES TEXT-BASED GROUP

This group of participants believe that reading is learned through isolated practice of individual skills with short, unrelated text. Activities in the classroom should include short readings, skill drills, and independent work. Participants feel that the text and the teacher is the authority and that she/he directs the instruction and indicates the correctness of student response. In this type of classroom the basal and worksheets are predominantly used. All activities in comprehension are text-driven, involving translation of the author's intended message.

Table 6.1 illustrates the categories created by the participants in this study.

Table 6.1 Categories of Participants

Category	Reader-Based	Interactive	Text-Based
Integrated Language	Case 1 Rita	Case 3 Ina	Case 6 Tonya
Unified Language	Case 2 Rose	Case 4 Ivan	Case 7 Tess
Mastery of Specific Skills	0	Case 5 Ida	0

Table 6.2 illustrates information which may indicate individual differences adding to an understanding of the subjectivity of the participants.

Table 6.2 Text-Based Participants

Category	Participant	Yrs.	Aspire	Education
Text-Based/ Integrated Language Acquisition	Case 6 Tonya	5	Career Woman	Bachelor of Arts English/ Social Studies
Text-Based/ Unified Language Acquisition	Case 7 Tess	21	Teacher	Bachelor of Arts English/Library Science Special Education (Certification)
Text-Based/ Specific Skills Mastery	None			

Case 6

Text-Based/Integrated Language Acquisition Participant

General Characteristics

Tonya teaches eighth grade regular language arts at Hill Middle School. She has five years of teaching experience. She began her education in business and wanted to "be a career woman." As she pursued her business education, Tonya realized that business was not something she wanted to do, that it was "just something to do." She decided that teaching was the place for her, because her family had all been teachers. It seemed like the logical

place for her. She has taught one year of special education and the remainder of her five years have been in language arts. Her undergraduate education is in secondary English and social studies education.

Educational Setting

I arrived after Tonya's class had entered and was seated. She motioned for me to sit in the desk at the back of the classroom. A student named Erin climbed on a desk and reached for some material on the top of an eight-foot cabinet. (It was terribly near me!) Suddenly, the material fell a foot from my chair and made a loud noise. Robin, an extremely tall male student seated at the front of the classroom, stood up and yelled, "That's my stuff!" There was lots of talking and walking around the room.

Tonya exclaimed, "O.K. Guys, listen up. We're going to have a practice spelling test."

Another student asked, "Mrs. Marks, it's for a grade? Huh? We just got the words yesterday."

Tonya retorted, "No, we had a worksheet on Monday." The student responded, "Manh, how we supposed to know."

Tonya reprimanded, "Did you study?"

The student embarrassed, responded, "No."

Tonya disgusted replied, "Well, you should have studied."

Her classroom was filled with all kinds of commercial posters, a grading scale for class, and a class rule sheet,

titled, but with no rules. There were three rows of desks facing the front and the teacher's desk, and two rows on each side facing the center. The room was crowded, too small for so many desks. Atmosphere is very casual; boys had hats on in the classroom.

Hill Middle School is an at-risk, inner city middle school. The Director of Federal Programs, who is also the person in charge of classifying schools, states:

At-risk schools are schools with predominately at-risk populations. This is determined by two factors, economic and academic. The criteria is obtained from numbers of free-lunch participants and low percentages on state assessment tests.

Beliefs

Tonya believes that before children can comprehend, they must be able to recognize all of the words on a page. Also, that there is usually only one acceptable answer to a question from a story. She feels that if children are weak in one knowledge source important to the comprehension process, it is still possible for them to read and comprehend. However, she also feels that teachers should normally expect and encourage children to have different interpretations of a story. She considers it important that teachers inquire what children know about the topic of each story before they begin reading.

In instruction Tonya feels that reading, writing, speaking, and listening are closely related learning tasks.

She attaches an importance to being read to frequently, while they are young so they acquire a "feel" for what reading is like. She also feels that children learn a great deal about reading by watching their parents at home. However, she feels that some children learn best by reading widely and often, others learn best through direct instruction. Less proficient readers often benefit from more direct and structured learning experiences in Tonya's opinion.

Practices

Interview

In the interview, I asked Tonya what exactly determines what she teaches and the materials she uses in her classroom. She responded:

A lot of it depends on the kids I am teaching; if I have kids who like to read or don't like to read or care how their reading skills are...if they are kids who understand a lot when they read or if they need to take things a little bit slower. I won't just give them an hour and say read, because they can't.

That's what I have against whole language, they want them to read for enjoyment, but so many of these kids don't know how to read and enjoy it.

I use the curriculum guide as a base, as a basis for the skills that I actually teach. I collect things all the time for them to read, *Reader's Digest*, different magazines, a lot of the textbook. It gives them a little bit of structure and it's something that they are used to, you know, read the book, answer the questions, that type of thing. They're more comfortable.

Observation

Tonya gave a spelling practice test on Friday followed by a formal spelling test on Monday. If students made a

perfect paper on Friday, it was not necessary to take the test on Monday. Each word was called out twice, followed by a sentence. I did not ask where the words originated; I did not see a spelling text. However, words were similar in structure; i.e., wagging, waging, starrng, staring, etc. Students switched papers and corrected from the list in their notebooks. Several students did not miss any. She collected these.

Students were very talkative; Robin got up and walked to a student, taking his pen. Tonya addressed Robin and told him to sit. When he did not, she sent him out of the classroom. He took the pen and placed it on the top of the door frame. Erin shouted, "You better talk to Robin!"

Next, all students were told to journal. The journal topic was on the board, "If you couldn't watch TV for a year, what do you think you would do with all of your extra time? Do you think you would be better off if you watched TV more or less than you do now? Why?" Students journalled for ten minutes with no share time.

Following this activity, Tonya distributed two adverb worksheets. These consisted of thirty sentences on both pages. She gave examples of adverbs:

Is anyone having problems with the ones we've done so far? O.K. can you "here" anything? You h-e-a-r something, but you can't h-e-r-e anything. Can you? So "here" is an adverb, because it tells where.

Students were told to underline the correct adverb and were given twenty minutes to do so. Robin was seated at

the front of the classroom facing the class.. She corrected him constantly. Tonya walked and assisted any student who needed help. She later picked up the sheets and asked the class to begin their dialogue journals, since today was Friday. She instructed, "No talking, all communication takes place in writing." Students began and everyone was writing, except for Robin.

The next activity was a reading passage about ghosts. The ditto consisted of a reading passage, comprehension questions, which focused on main idea, inference, literal meaning, matching, vocabulary, and several expressing-yourself questions. It was a published worksheet.

Two students began to argue. Tonya asked both to step outside. She spoke with them outside, as Robin recovered the stolen pen and returned it to Erin. Robin remarked to one of the students who was with Tonya and they began to argue. Tonya stood between them and ordered Robin to his seat.

At the end of the class period, I asked Tonya if I could interview a student. I interviewed Erin.

Student Responses

Erin was pleased to be interviewed. She remarked that Tonya's class is a fun class. She commented that a lot of writing and reading is done in the classroom. She is very bothered by Robin's constant interruptions, which demands

so much of the teacher's attention. She enjoys writing and says she wishes they could write more stories in class and share them.

Consistencies

Tonya believes that the text and the teacher was the authority. In her classroom Tonya remained at the front and in charge. She directed the lesson and then students were told to work independently on the worksheets provided. However, as students began to talk, Tonya allowed them to go on as long as they were doing the work. As she presented her skills lesson on adverbs, she allowed questions, stipulating the correctness. She feels her role as teacher is discover the weaknesses in skill development and to assist her students to work for mastery.

Vocabulary is given as students look up definitions, write sentences using the words, and are later tested on these. Formal testing is done in spelling, reading, and grammar.

Inconsistencies

This category of reader-based/mastery of specific skills is a contradiction in itself. It indicates that the participant believes children learn by reading, writing, speaking, and listening in authentic environments; however, instruction should include isolated skills mastery with short, unrelated text.

Tonya teaches spelling in a traditional manner; that is the students copy their spelling words on Monday and are tested on Friday. This is consistent with mastery of specific skills; however, not with the reader-based beliefs of learning spelling through reading and writing. Also, in mastery of specific skills instruction, the teacher directs the lesson; Tonya gave mini-lessons on each topic and then allowed students to work independently and in small groups. Table 6.3 illustrates various consistencies and inconsistencies between Tonya's beliefs (reader-based) and her practices (mastery of specific skills).

Table 6.3 Case 6: Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Text-Based	Consistencies	Inconsistencies
Source of Meaning	text/teacher authority	It's important to have them all reading the same thing so that I can kind of gauge where they are.	We do journal writing every day.
Teacher's Role	directs lesson, stipulates the correctness	I think my role is to find the skills that they need.	A lot of my teaching depends on the kids I'm teaching. To do things that are important to them.
Student's Role	read short, non-related text, learn through isolated practice of individual skills	I teach the basics, grammar and reading skills from the textbook. This gives them a little bit of structure.	We read so they can learn how to write.
Materials	basal-type text, worksheets	I use the curriculum guide as a base.	

(table con'd.)

Activities	short readings, skill drills, independent work	We do lots of different types of reading. We diagram sentences...do a lot of fill in the blank stuff like with adjectives.	I like to pair kids up with some other student who knows a little more, so they can explain.
Evaluation	short objective tests with one correct answer	"You're going to have a practice spelling test." Spelling is 100 points, reading is 100 points, grammar is 100 points. "I give grammar test once a week."	I do a lot of the whole language for writing. I evaluate every day in some form or another. "Writing is 100 points. I pick up their binders as a whole large portfolio type thing and check it."

Case 7

Text-Based/Unified Language
Acquisition ParticipantGeneral Characteristics

Tess has twenty-one years of teaching experience. She states:

I had always decided that I would be a teacher when I was very young. What kind of teacher was not clear until I got into college. I began as a regular education teacher for two years, then I went into special education. I worked for twelve years in special education. After that, I decided I didn't want to teach anymore. I was going to quit; I didn't like the system; I was getting out. I didn't see where I was helping anybody and I could, of course, make more money somewhere else. And then I came here. The first couple of months were very hard, but then I began to realize that I could use that special education

background with these children. Because I understood the different levels, I was able to reach quite a few more. I love coming to work. I don't want to miss work. I don't want to substitute. It's just a different ball game. So here I am. And I'll hang around here until I can't take it anymore.

Tess has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in secondary English Education and library science. She has sixteen hours in psychology and wishes to work towards a masters in psychology. She is now pursuing a masters in education and is also certified in special education. She teaches three two-hour blocks of eighth-grade language arts.

Educational Setting

Tess teaches at North Middle, an at-risk inner-city school. As I entered her classroom, I read the poster on her door "You can if you think you can." This theme was reinforced on other posters in the classroom, as well as, in the manner which Tess addressed her students during the class period.

Her desks were arranged in groups of three and four. The students entered the classroom talking and socializing. One student sang out and Tess immediately addressed him very quietly, "I'm not going to have any of that." He became quiet and took his seat.

Beliefs

Tess believes that children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during

reading. She also feels that children who are weak at word-recognition skills, usually cannot overcome this weakness with strengths at other levels of the comprehension process. Tess agrees that if a reader does not comprehend a text in the way an author intended, we can usually say that they have misunderstood the text. However, she feels that the meaning of a text is usually a joint product of reader and text. Tess considers that readers use a variety of strategies as they read--from sounding out unfamiliar words to guessing familiar words in rich context.

Practices

Interview

When asked what determines what she teaches and the materials she uses, Tess states:

First of all, I use test scores from my students' previous years. I take these home, I review them, and it gives me an idea of where I can start with these kids. I find out what interests they have from an interest inventory sheet. I also use newspapers, magazines, I have been known to use cereal boxes. And it is all determined by what I think they need in order to increase not only their reading level, but their fluency of reading.

Tess does use the basal text; however, she uses selected stories, which she finds appropriate for her particular class at significant times. She stated that she had rummaged through the book room and found old *Counterpoint* texts, which were "about one hundred years

old." So she "collected a stack of those books out of the storage room and brought them to class;" they "had perfect examples for my lesson on third person singular case studies."

She also feels that "reading whatever you want gives the teacher a chance to be creative and it gives the children a much better focus other than that they are limited and that is no good. We limit them too much."

Observation

Tess came in and took her place on her stool in the center of the classroom and asked if everyone has had a good day. Candy, a student, says "I had a bad day, 'cause Mr. Washington be getting on my nerves." Tess responded, "If you were writing a paragraph, how would you go about telling this, instead of saying 'getting on my nerves' what could you say?" Several students responded "Describe, tell how, show, don't tell." Obviously, this way of working with description had been discussed often.

Tess works with vocabulary in a holistic context. She allows students to bring words from their readings and from their interactions with people and as they watch television. The words are analyzed in order that students understand them in breadth and depth and are able to have long-term memory storage, rather than memorization for vocabulary tests. Primarily, she brings in words and

scaffolds the procedures for analysis and synthesis of words which students will eventually bring into the classroom.

Journals are a part of each day's lesson. Of course, my journals. They follow the diary type. Get your feelings down on paper. I'm not grading for correctness, but I am for content. All can share if they want to.

She brings in variations of traditional activities such as her own "Spelling B with a Twist."

This is done two or three times a week, which is fantastic. The kids are divided into groups just as they walk into the door. I take old vocabulary words from the story we are studying at the time or from library assignments. I ask questions about the word or how to spell it. That's how we review. It gets pretty competitive sometimes.

Tess feels very comfortable incorporating a variety of activities.

Whole class discussions are done on an average of maybe twenty to twenty-five minutes a day for whatever reason. However, there is a lot of group activity done in my classroom. No two days are the same, very seldom the same two days in a row. Right now I have a class with four different groups and they might be working on four different things at one time.

During an observation Tess displayed several sentences, which she had gleaned from student writing on the overhead transparency project. These incorrect sentences were the focus of her grammar mini-lesson. She asked students to help correct the sentences and reminded them that these sentences are their sentences. In this way

Tess teaches skills in a very relevant and current fashion. The students listened very intently and participated when called on.

Tess uses journals three to four times weekly. She prefixed her journalling activity by saying:

Let's write today. Get your journals. Let's number this one number thirty-five, please. Ask all of your questions now. No walking. Remember no moving. Your topic is 'If you could return to a point in your life and change a decision you made, what would it be? Why?' For a moment or two I want you to think. You have a chance now, I'm letting you go back and change it. Let your ideas flow into that paper. Don't worry about punctuation. You may begin. Remember when you've finished no walking or talking.

She began to write in her journal, which she has so eloquently decorated with pink lace and ribbon. However, one student stopped writing and looked at her. She raised an eyebrow and he quickly began to write again. She quietly walked around and spoke to students who had their heads down on their desks. Disappointed, she laments:

Finish that thought. I didn't get a chance to write mine; I had to wake some of you. Remember you need to stretch because you're not going to go to sleep on me. These will be picked up on Friday. Would anyone like to share? Remember you don't have to.

No one shared. The class began the next activity, which was a novel discussion. She gave a brief quiz.

- (1) Name the narrator of the story.
- (2) What kind of novel is this?
- (3) Give me two character traits of the main character.

(4) Identify Apron.

Tess allowed students to refer to their book and discuss with others at their table. She collected the papers. Next, is a novel discussion which is directed by Tess. She led the discussion and corrected answers which did not coincide with those on her syllabus, commenting, "No, I don't think so. Try again."

The syllabus was teacher-made and was very detailed, chapter by chapter, including vocabulary and discussion questions at the literal and inferential level.

Student Responses

Anna began her interview by saying:

I like Ms. Martin; I think she's great! She's nice. I like the groups. Sometimes a student can explain something better than a teacher can. In seventh grade they didn't let us work in groups; they would think we were cheating. She teaches. If you don't understand something she can explain it.

Anna mentioned that in Tess's class the other kids agree that you really learn, but it is in a fun way.

Each day the students know that when they go into the class they will be learning something. They like her more than the other teachers, because they know they're going to learn something. We write all the time in her class and we get to talk to each other to conference about our writing. That's really fun and our writing is better when we get to talk.

Anna said Tess does not give worksheets, her treatment of grammar is holistic; that is, it is done in groups during the writing process from sentences gleaned from the student writing as was discussed earlier.

Consistencies

Tess is the text-based/interactive participant. She believes students learn through isolated practice of individual skills with short, unrelated text, where emphasis should be placed on decoding of text and literal interpretations. This may account for her giving students a very detailed syllabus to accompany novel discussion and classroom assignments. Interactive instruction dictates teacher direction, but also incorporates plans for individual differences. Tess directed the novel discussion; however, she then gave independent and small group work as she facilitated students who needed her assistance.

She gives attention to all knowledge sources as she directed a discussion of the novel and grammar exercises. Tess used a variety of strategies and materials as she attempts to reach all the students in her class; this is a characteristic of interactive instruction.

Inconsistencies

Although Tess believes in isolated skills teaching, she did teach grammar in context. She had gleaned several sentences from student writing and as she showed these to the class, she explained usage rules; i.e., rather than

isolated skills of fragmented texts. The students enjoyed knowing that these were their mistakes, and not someone else; they were relative and authentic.

She is very attentive to the abilities of children saying, "I've used sixth-grade stories in the eleventh grade. It worked. Some I read, some kids read themselves." Vocabulary is taught through her strategy called "A Word a Day." This activity is teacher-directed at the beginning of school and as the year progresses, the students become in charge.

The following Table 6.4 illustrates some of Tess's consistencies and inconsistencies that she displays with her practice.

Table 6.4 Case 7: Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Specific Skills	Consistencies	Inconsistencies
Source of Meaning	text/teacher authority		Reading whatever we want gives the teacher a chance to be creative. We limit them too much.
Teacher's Role	directs lesson, stipulates the correctness	Teacher stands in center of class and directs discussion for 30 minutes.	I have a class with five groups... working on four different things at one time.
Student's Role	read short, non-related text, learn through isolated practice of individual skills		I use newspapers, magazines, the back of cereal boxes, what I think they need for fluency.

(table con'd.)

Materials	basal-type text, worksheets	I do use the basal, parts of it. I might use a six grade book in my eighth grade class if the information I want is in the book.	We use what we need. I like that freedom. How can kids grow when you say you can only read this?
Activities	short readings, skill drills, independent work		Some I read, some the kids read themselves, other times we have choral reading or whatever. Whole class discussion is done on an average of maybe 20-25 minutes a day for whatever reason. The progress sheet helps me to group them for certain activities.
Evaluation	short objective tests with one correct answer		Evaluate, I don't evaluate to see what they know. I want to see what they don't know. It lets me know what I need to teach. I grade on each individual child's progress not compared to others. I don't use formal book test.

Cross-Case Analysis

The two participants in this category demonstrate a number of inconsistencies. Tonya, who wanted to be a career woman, but later realized teaching was what she needed to do, believes reading is text-driven; however, she incorporates journalling, process writing, and collaborative groups, portfolio assessment, and individualized reading. The materials and activities that she utilizes depend on

the ability of her students. Tess, who always wanted to be a teacher, feels teachers should be creative and that we limit children too much. She incorporates collaborative groups, process writing, various materials, individualized reading, and informal evaluation.

Tonya shows consistencies with her beliefs as she continues to do traditional spelling lessons and tests, teach skills in isolation using the English text and worksheets, and making sure all students are on the same class materials, so you can "gage where they are." Tess stands in front of the class and has whole-class discussion for twenty minutes each day. She uses only selected stories from the basal.

There is a definite gap between Tonya's beliefs and practices; I speculate she is a young teacher in transition. Tess is a confident veteran who seems to truly believe in everything she is doing.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

And so to completely analyze what we do when we read would almost be the acme of a psychologist's achievements, for it would be to describe very many of the most intricate workings of the human mind, as well as, to unravel the tangled story of the most remarkable specific performance that civilization has learned in all its history (p. 6).

Edmund Burke Huey

The rationale for my study emanates from the paradigm shift which began five years ago in my school district. The shift involved a reconceptualization of the traditional view of the reading process. The ramifications of this holistic view, the learner bringing meaning to the text, caused a dramatic upheaval in our educational community. As Huey suggests to truly "unravel the tangled story" would certainly be a miracle.

However, new research investigating reading processes and their influence on classroom instruction have influenced many in the academic community to propose new theories of this extraordinary process. This "new" thinking about reading promised teacher empowerment and students who would be self-directed.

As teachers attended workshops, many felt this empowerment, while many others felt disturbed. The reasons for these reactions are as numerous as the individual teachers involved. We were asked to understand a

philosophy. A philosophy, so broad and abstract, it was inexplicable to many of us. Each of us grew at different rates and in different directions, including the six pilot teachers, who were recruited to teach others.

This was indeed a time of growth, for our own beliefs about learning were questioned by others as well as by ourselves. The strength of our philosophy and how we translated this philosophy into practice was dependent upon a number of things: "...individual's life experiences, observations of students, interactions with colleagues, professional reading, knowledge, and interpretation of the research and understanding of language learning" (Routman, 1991, p. 12). I expected this same diversity in my participants.

My study focused around three research questions:

- (1) What common themes arise from the reading theories and practices of teachers who teach reading?
- (2) How do teachers attempt to translate their theories into practice?
- (3) How do teachers accommodate their own practices and beliefs with the dictates of their school system?

In this study, I investigated seven middle school language arts teachers and their translation of reading theory into classroom practice. The responses on the Leu and Kinzer (1988) Beliefs' Questionnaire dictated the categories of participants. Using the Leu and Kinzer

(1988) categories created by a synergistic relationship of how reading takes place and how it develops, nine categories evolved. First, the teacher responses regarding how reading takes place were:

- (1) Text-based explanation indicates that the text is the primary source of information and the student's goal is to make meaning from the text. This suggests that there is one correct way of interpreting what the author intended.
- (2) Interactive explanation perceives students using both text information and personal knowledge to develop meaning. The reader's expectations of the printed texts, in the interactive view, are equally as important as accurately recognizing the word while reading, because meaning is the joint effort of the reader and the text.
- (3) The reader-based view involves the student's prior knowledge to bring meaning to the text, as the teacher encourages students to have different interpretations. In this view, students background knowledge and experience play a major role in the comprehension of the text.

Second, from the Leu and Kinzer (1988) Questionnaire three categories about how reading develops were created:

- (1) Mastery of specific skills presents a view of reading whereby learning a number of pre-determined and sequential skills will produce readers.
- (2) Integrated language acquisition reflects the belief that all language processes are involved in the act of reading.
- (3) Unified language acquisition focuses on different reading behaviors at different times in the course of a student's reading development, a balance of the two previous philosophies.

Table 7.1, which follows, indicates the nine categories that were formed by responses to these instruments. There were no participants in the Text-Based/Mastery of Specific Skills and Reader-Based/Mastery of Specific Skills categories.

Table 7.1 Classification of Participants

Category	Reader-Based	Interactive	Text-Based
Integrated Language Acquisition	Rita	Ina	Tonya
Unified Language Acquisition	Rose	Ivan	Tess
Mastery of Skills		Ida	

The models of reading used in this study were chosen because of their obvious frames of reference, or as

Ruddell, et al. (1994) suggest "snapshots" of a dynamic process. The models allowed me to demonstrate clearly the theories created, which ultimately govern certain instructional philosophies.

The manner in which a reader views the text; i.e., reader-based explanation, interactive explanation, and text-based explanation are pictures of the respective models. The three different models are: Goodman's (1985) transactional-psycholinguistic model, which reflects a reader-based explanation; Gough's (1985) linear sequence model, which reflects a text-based explanation; and Rumelhart's (1985) interactive model, exhibiting a combination of both previous models or an interactive explanation.

As a result of employing models, which were based on how reading takes place, I should have been able to predict instruction, that is, how reading develops. Therefore, reader-based teachers were expected to teach according to the integrated language arts philosophy. Likewise, interactive participants were expected to teach within the dictates of the unified language acquisition philosophy. Finally, the text-based group were expected to teach according to the rubrics of the mastery of specific skills philosophy. Therefore, any other pair of categories would

be a contradiction. After the instruments were administered, I discovered my predictions were inaccurate as demonstrated in Table 7.2.

However, it is important to remember that these categories represent points on a continuum of instruction and beliefs and that there are as many combinations of both as there are individual teachers. Therefore, mixtures of beliefs and practices are expected.

Reader-Based	Interactive	Text-Based
Integrated Language	Unified Language	Mastery of Skills

Figure 7.1 A Continuum of Beliefs and Practices

This continuum of beliefs and practices illustrates the span of possible variations of reading processes and consequential instruction. There are many points on this continuum, just as there are many variations of teaching reading, and just as there are many individual teachers.

I utilized a cross-case analysis of these seven case studies to investigate the teachers' beliefs about the reading process and how these beliefs operationalize into practice. A cross-case analysis consists of "... grouping together answers from different people to common questions

or analyzing different perspectives on central issues" (Patton, 1990, p. 376). After categories were established, participants took part in guided interviews and classroom observations. Common themes, which filtered through continual reflection and reading, were examined for possible theory explanation.

Results of Beliefs' Questionnaire

Since basal usage governs the instruction in eighty-five per cent of our classrooms (NAEP, 1993), I predicted that the text-based/mastery of specific skills would be the category with the majority of the eighty-six teachers I surveyed. The results in Table 7.2 prove this to be untrue. This is evidence of a discrepancy between our educational community's beliefs and practices, and between our beliefs about reading and the large percentage of basal usage. Through participant interviews and observations, I attempted to understand this discrepancy.

Table 7.2 Categories Determined by the Two Beliefs Statements

Beliefs	Integrated Language Acquisition	Unified Language Acquisition	Mastery of Specific Skills
Reader-Based	33	12	0
Interactive	29	9	1
Text-Based	1	1	0

Table 7.3 Frequency of Responses on Belief Statements:
Raw scores and percentages n=86

Explanations for how reading takes place					
Text-Based		Reader-Based		Interactive	
2	2.32%	46	53.48%	38	44.18%
Explanations for how reading develops					
Mastery of Specific Skills		Integrated Language Acquisition		Unified Language Acquisition	
2	2.32%	62	72.09%	22	25.58%

Findings

Each group of participants will be analyzed and discussed in the following pages. Each group will be analyzed with reference to the instruction that logically follows from a particular belief about how reading takes place. The following categories will illustrate a point of reference for analysis.

Beliefs About Reading.

Text-Based

1. Source of Meaning: text/teacher authority
2. Teacher's Role: directs the lesson and stipulates the correctness of students' responses
3. Students' Role: read short, non-related text, learn through isolated practice of individual skills
4. Materials: basal-type text, worksheets
5. Activities: short readings, skill drills, independent work
6. Evaluation: short objective tests with one correct answer

Reader-Based

1. Source of Meaning: students bring meaning to the text
2. Teachers' Role: models and guides the lesson
3. Students' Role: use prior knowledge to anticipate and confirm their understanding
4. Materials: variety of materials, including full-length literature, students' own stories
5. Activities: long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work
6. Evaluation: subjective tests allowing multiple interpretations

Interactive

1. Source of Meaning: students use both text information and personal knowledge to develop meaning
2. Teachers' Role: directs the lesson but plans for individual differences among students
3. Students' Role: use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them
4. Materials: variety of reading materials, skills worksheets
5. Activities: varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work
6. Evaluation: objective and subjective tests (usually literal-level and inferential-level questions)

Tables 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8, 7.9, and 7.10

illustrate consistencies and inconsistencies of participants' responses on the beliefs' instrument and from data collected during interviews and observations. The six areas I will illustrate are: source of meaning, teacher's role, student's role, materials, activities, and evaluation.

Discussion of Results

The seven case studies will be analyzed for their significance to the study and the themes that have been gleaned from each interview and observation.

Case 1

Table 7.4 Case 1: Rita's Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Reader-Based	Beliefs	Practices
Source of Meaning	students bring meaning to the text	a joint product of reader and text	teacher and text authority
Teacher's Role	models and guides the lessons	models and guides the lesson	teacher controls lesson
Student's Role	use prior knowledge to anticipate and confirm their understanding	use variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	use variety of reading strategies appropriate for them
Materials	variety of materials, including full-length literature, students' own stories	variety of materials including full-length, literature, students' own stories	variety of materials including full-length, literature, students' own stories
Activities	long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work	long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work
Evaluation	subjective tests, allowing multiple interpretations	subjective tests, allowing multiple interpretations	objective and subjective tests

General Characteristics

Rita was the reader-based/integrated language acquisition participant. Rita feels that she has missed effective training in new methods during the time she was away from teaching, this is evident in her eagerness about learning new strategies and her need for control.

Educational Setting

Rita's second language training extends her perspective on how children learn language. This has reinforced her beliefs about authentic and holistic strategies. However, the setting in which Rita taught was not conducive to a holistic environment.

Consistencies

Rita expressed consistent beliefs with reader-based criteria in four of the six categories. However, Rita's practices are consistent with these beliefs in only two of these categories. Rita's practices showed consistencies with reader-based beliefs in several ways; i.e., her use of novels and individualized reading during class time, individual research topics to increase background knowledge before writing about a topic, and informal book projects.

Inconsistencies

Rita expressed a desire to be a "facilitator;" however, she controlled the lesson. Her beliefs were consistent with interactive standards in four of the six categories; i.e., source of meaning, student's role,

activities, and evaluation. She felt that the source of meaning was a joint product of the reader and the text; however, in her classroom the text and the teacher were the authority. Also, in her interview she commented that she did not discuss vocabulary, a necessary facet of the reader-based view. Finally, the absence of journalling, formal structured grammar and spelling instruction, and overly structured class discussion is inconsistent with this opinion.

Case 2

Table 7.5 Case 2: Rose's Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Reader-Based	Beliefs	Practices
Source of Meaning	students bring meaning to the text	students bring meaning to the text	teacher and text
Teacher's Role	models and guides the lessons	models and guides	teacher directs and stipulates the correctness
Student's Role	use prior knowledge to anticipate and confirm their understanding	use prior knowledge to understand/ read widely/ direct instruction	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them
Materials	variety of materials, including full-length literature, students' own stories	variety of materials, including full-length literature, students' own stories	variety of reading materials, skills worksheets

(table con'd.)

Activities	long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work
Evaluation	subjective tests, allowing multiple interpretations	objective and subjective tests	objective and subjective tests

General Characteristics

Rose was the reader-based/unified language acquisition participant. She is a teacher simply because her mother insisted that she become a teacher. She has taught for twenty-three years and displays a definite air of confidence, which I attribute to her acting ability and years of experience.

Educational Setting

Rose mentioned that teaching is a daily performance. She remained in the front of the classroom and all student desks were turned in the direction of the teacher. This is inconsistent with a reader-based framework, where the teacher models and instructs the lesson.

Consistencies

Rose's beliefs are consistent with reader-based beliefs in four categories. Rose believes prior knowledge, a variety of materials, teacher modeling, and student bringing meaning to a text are important. This accounts for her method of reading to the class. She reads several chapters of a book, discusses and acts the stories out, and then has students read several chapters. Students are later formally tested on these chapters so that students give their interpretations of the text. I learned of these formal tests from student interviews. Her practices are consistent with reader-based beliefs in no categories.

Inconsistencies

Rose demonstrated inconsistencies with reader-based beliefs in two categories. Instead of holistic strategies she opted for interactive strategies such as both subjective and objective evaluation and varied readings, worksheet-type activities. Her practices were inconsistent in all categories as she controlled class discussion and chose formal whole-group discussion as she remained in the front of the classroom.

Case 3

Table 7.6 Case 3: Ina's Consistencies and Inconsistencies

	Interactive	Beliefs	Practices
Source of Meaning	students use both text and personal knowledge	students use both text and personal knowledge	students use both text and personal knowledge
Teacher's Role	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences
Student's Role	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them
Materials	variety of reading materials, worksheets	variety of reading materials, worksheets	variety of reading materials, worksheets
Activities	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work
Evaaluation	objective and subjective tests	objective and subjective tests	objective and subjective tests

General Characteristics

Ina is the interactive/integrated language arts participant and a sixth-grade language arts teacher, who

has twenty-three years of experience and a masters in Administration and Supervision, as well as, a Reading Specialist. She has always wanted to be a teacher.

Educational Setting

Ina had numerous tradebooks filling her classroom, along with lots of writing paper, scissors, pens, pencils, markers, and other process-writing tools. Her desk was at the side of her classroom near the center. There was lots of student work displayed and activities and assignments for the day were written on the board. Student desks faced the center of the classroom, until group work began and they were then moved into groups. This setting is consistent with interactive instruction.

Consistencies

Ina was more conscientious about professional improvement, "I just can't read enough professionally." Her experience in workshops has been taken seriously and she continued trying to learn more. She had incorporated many of the integrated, holistic strategies and constantly was aware of her students and their progress, employing both reader-based and interactive practices.

Ina is consistent in all criteria with interactive beliefs and instruction in her beliefs as well as her practices. This is due to the interactive philosophy consisting of aspects of the other two philosophies.

Inconsistencies

I found no inconsistencies with Ina's beliefs and practices.

Case 4

Table 7.7 Case 4: Ivan's Consistencies and Inconsistencies

	Interactive	Beliefs	Practices
Source of Meaning	students use both text and personal knowledge	students bring meaning to the text	students use both text and personal knowledge
Teacher's Role	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences	models and guides the lesson	models and guides the lesson
Student's Role	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	use prior knowledge to anticipate and confirm their understanding	use prior knowledge to anticipate and confirm their understanding
Materials	variety of reading materials, worksheets	variety of reading materials, full-length literature	variety of reading materials, worksheets
Activities	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	varied readings combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	varied readings combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work
Evaluation	objective and subjective tests	objective and subjective tests	objective and subjective tests

General Characteristics

Ivan is the interactive/unified acquisition participant and has six years experience. He has a degree in English and Social Studies Education. He became disenchanted with teaching, but returned after twelve years in the business community. He feels he has missed an enormous amount of training that other teachers have had the opportunity of having, thus causing him to feel unsure about his teaching.

Educational Setting

Ivan's classroom was the setting of a very integrated classroom with his desk in a very inconspicuous area of the classroom and student desks in groups. However, there was no student work displayed and very few trade books available; this is inconsistent with interactive environments.

Consistencies

Ivan's beliefs are consistent with interactive criteria in the classroom activities and the evaluation of his students. In classroom observations, Ivan displayed interactive practices as he used a variety of materials and readings, along with worksheets and different types of assessments. Ivan used trade books, the basal, and the English textbook. He saw his role as facilitator to encourage the love of reading. Grammar was taught in

context, but worksheets were used to reinforce isolated skills.

Inconsistencies

However, in the interview I discovered a several reader-based criteria in the areas of source of meaning, teacher's role, student's role, and materials. In the observation, Ivan displayed reader-based criteria as he modelled and guided the lesson and used strategies for prior knowledge. Ivan is truly a teacher in transition. Journalling and process writing were daily activities where students were given the choice of a topic or they might select the teacher's topic. Sustained individualized reading was a daily activity where students might read anything they wish.

Ivan felt an obvious tension between what he believed and in what he practiced. This was evidenced in his reading to the class, his realizing that that was very important for literacy development, and his feeling very uneasy when his students did not listen. Ivan believed that holistic and authentic activities with some structure was what was necessary and made attempts at implementing these beliefs.

Case 5

Table 7.8 Case 5: Ida's Consistencies and Inconsistencies

Category	Interactive	Beliefs	Practices
Source of Meaning	students use both text and personal knowledge	students bring meaning to the text	students use both text and personal knowledge
Teacher's Role	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences	directs the lesson but plans for individual differences
Student's Role	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them
Materials	variety of reading materials, worksheets	variety of reading materials, worksheets	variety of reading materials, worksheets
Activities	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work
Evaluation	objective/subjective tests	objective/subjective tests	objective/subjective tests

General Characteristics

Ida is the interactive/mastery of specific skills participant and has been teaching sixth-grade language arts for five years. She has a degree in English Education.

Ida is very confident as she borrows from both integrated language arts and mastery of skills.

Educational Setting

Ida's classroom was consistent with a mastery of skills environment; she had few tradebooks and dictionaries, her desk was at the front and center of the classroom, and there was no student work displayed. Also on the blackboard was the objective for the week and the week's spelling list, characteristics of mastery of skills instruction.

Consistencies

Ida was consistent with interactive philosophy, feeling that students use both the text and personal knowledge for meaning. Also, she was consistent with materials, activities, and evaluation employed in an interactive base.

Ida used the state curriculum guide, the basal, and the English text. Writing process was done each day along with sustained silent reading and vocabulary activities. Ida saw her role as counselor, encouraging students to better themselves. Ida enforced structure and firm discipline and she incorporated sustained silent reading, journalling, and writing process.

Ida left no doubt that she felt skills were what was important in language arts. She felt reading is text driven and that the teacher is the center of the learning

environment. However, she incorporated holistic strategies and taught skills in context. Because of the small number of students in her class she was able to give ample attention to individual students.

Inconsistencies

Ida allowed students to read full-length literature of their choosing with holistic strategies and assessments. Also, Ida chose to model and guide the lesson rather than direct instruction followed by independent work

Case 6

Table 7.9 Case 6: Tonya's Consistencies and Inconsistencies

	Text-Based	Beliefs	Practices
Source of Meaning	text/teacher authority	students use both text and personal knowledge	text/teacher is authority
Teacher's Role	directs lesson, stipulates the correctness	directs the lesson, stipulates the correctness	directs the lesson, stipulates the correctness
Student's Role	read short, non-related text, learn through isolated practice of individual skills	read short, non-related text, learn through isolated practice of individual skills	read short non-related text, learn through isolated practice of individual skills
Materials	basal-type text, worksheets	basal-type text, worksheets	basal-type text, worksheets

(table con'd.)

Activities	short readings, skill drills, independent work	varied readings, combination of worksheets and personal writing, independent work	short readings, skill drills independent work
Evaluation	short objective tests with one correct answer	objective and subjective tests	short objective tests with one correct answer

General Characteristics

Tonya is the text-based/integrated language acquisition participant. She teaches seventh and eighth grade language arts and has five years of experience, one of those years was spent teaching special education. I speculate that this special education experience has had some holistic influence, prompting her to make reader-based choices on the the beliefs' instrument.

Educational Setting

Tonya had numerous tradebooks in her classroom, a reader-based characteristic; however, the mastery of skills influence was evident by no evidence of student work displayed and student desks facing the front. Tonya remained at the front of the classroom until students began working on adverb worksheets. She disciplined several students constantly.

Consistencies

Tonya demonstrated consistencies with text-based/mastery of specific skills beliefs and practices: she felt that there is usually only one correct answer; she mentioned in her interview that she used the state curriculum guide, basals, magazines, newspapers, and tradebooks to determine what she would teach; grammar was taught in isolation with emphasis on mastery; the writing process was also employed, but in the form of answers to designated questions; and the traditional spelling test on Friday. Evaluation was formal. Tonya felt there is only one acceptable answer to a question in a story; the reading she distributed was a short passage with matching and multiple-choice questions. Tonya used worksheets and short passages, which were characteristic of her category; however, the students worked together on these sheets.

Inconsistencies

Tonya demonstrated some inconsistencies as she employed integrated activities such as journalling, Sustained Silent Reading, and reading aloud. Tonya is a very young and vibrant teacher and eager to follow the footsteps of members of her family who have also been teachers. Tonya is a teacher in transition.

Case 7

Table 7.10 Case 7: Tess's Consistencies and Inconsistencies

	Text-Based	Beliefs	Practices
Source of Meaning	text/teacher authority	text/teacher authority	text/teacher authority
Teacher's Role	directs lesson, stipulates the correctness	directs lesson, but plans for individual differences	directs lesson, but plans for individual differences
Student's Role	read short, non-related text, learn through isolated practice of individual skills	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them	use a variety of reading strategies appropriate for them
Materials	basal-type text, worksheets	variety of reading materials including full-length literature	variety of reading materials including full-length literature
Activities	short readings, skill drills, independent work	long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work	long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, group work
Evaluation	short objective tests with one correct answer	objective and subjective tests	objective and subjective tests

General Characteristics

Tess was the text-based/unified language acquisition participant. She had twenty-one years of teaching experience, eighteen of these were spent teaching special

education. This special education influence afforded Tess a broader and more positive perspective on individual differences, requesting that children from special education were assigned to her language arts classroom. Her comment about this was "You couldn't pick them out; they're working; they're getting work done successfully."

Educational Setting

Tess displayed reader-based integrated language criteria by the numerous tradebooks, dictionaries, and other types of reading on her book shelves. Also, student work was displayed with baskets for books and other student materials and student desks were arranged in groups of four, for group work was a major part of Tess's class activities. However, her desk was in the center and front of her classroom, a characteristic of mastery of skills teaching.

Consistencies

Tess was consistent with text-based explanations as she considered the text and the teacher as the authority the source of meaning in her classroom.

Inconsistencies

Tess's beliefs and practices are consistent with the interactive philosophy in four criteria. These four are: her role is that of one who directs a lesson, but plans for individual differences, her students' role in which they use a variety of strategies appropriate for them, a variety

of materials used including full-length literature, activities that include long readings, open-ended questions, journal writing, and group work, and finally objective and subjective tests.

Her interactive consistencies were evident in many areas as she continually paid attention to individual differences. Tess took last year's test scores home at the beginning of the year and studied each child's strengths and weaknesses. She also used interest inventories, newspapers, magazines, environmental print, and the basal.

A combination of integrated and mastery of skills was evident in Tess's teaching as the writing process was used each day, with topics suggested by the teacher. Grammar was taught in context; however, reading skills were taught with a detailed syllabus for each chapter in the class novel that was covered. Tess instructs at the front of the classroom and facilitates as groups began working on class assignments. Some activities were journalling, sustained silent reading, games to foster grammar and spelling skills, and informal evaluation. There were no discipline problems.

Also interactive influences were evident as Tess felt that it was important to individualize reading instruction by taking into consideration the children's reading abilities. Tess allowed students to read the class

tradebooks; however, she had made a detailed syllabus which covered each chapter giving options to answer. She had no discipline problems because her students felt empowered, expecting that when they came to her classroom, they would learn about literacy. She allowed students to express their opinions as they casually discussed the class tradebook. In this category the basal is usually the primary text.

Cross-Case Analysis

As evidenced by the various tables demonstrating the cross-case analysis in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, differences and similarities jettisoned, as we viewed individual teacher's beliefs and practices. I have culled incidences where individual teachers, through interview and observation, have demonstrated the manner in which they perceive themselves and their teaching. I have also included some implicit disclosures that I have witnessed through the eyes of a researcher, a privileged native, and a stranger.

Research Questions

What common themes arise from the reading theories and practices of teachers who teach reading?

- (1) The whole language pilot program has made an impact on all language arts teachers in this particular school district. All seven participants in this

study are using holistic strategies, such as writing in process, sustained silent reading, teaching grammar in context, informal evaluation, and using only appropriate stories from the basal. One participant discontinued journalling this year.

- (2) The participants feel comfortable leaving the basal, but find it impossible to discontinue using the English text, if only as a resource to be used in the classroom.
- (3) Several of the participants who spoke negatively of holistic teaching had not read professionally.
- (4) All participants believed that prior knowledge is paramount to comprehension.
- (5) The majority of teachers surveyed felt that children should receive many opportunities to read materials unrelated to specific school learning tasks and that children should be frequently read to while they are young.
- (6) All teachers remain in transition, in spite their years of experience. Explicitly through their words or actions or implicitly by what they did not say, participants were constantly in search of new ideas and better ways to teach.
- (7) Unified language acquisition was the instructional strategy evident in all classrooms. Incorporation of

integrated language strategies such as process writing, collaborative grouping, grammar in context, and student-selection of reading, as well as, mastery of specific skills strategies including worksheets.

How do teachers attempt to translate their theories into practice?

- (1) Each teacher spoke with conviction as she/he was interviewed. I observed in all a sense of pride that they had been "chosen."
- (2) Each had heard the new insights about teaching and learning and felt a little uneasy about what they had done in the past.
- (3) Each spoke from experience and the comment, "I think this is the best way; it's what works for me," was continually heard. These teachers have tried what others think is the best way, have gleaned what they think is valuable, and are now doing what works for them.
- (4) The two reader-based participants found it necessary to structure their classrooms to retain teacher-control. Both of the classes I observed were advanced, an environment in which students are usually self-motivated.
- (5) The interactive participants utilized both mastery of specific skills instruction with worksheets, and

integrated language acquisition with process writing and sustained silent reading.

- (6) The text-based participants, just as the reader-based group, also demonstrated a large gap between beliefs and practices. Both incorporated worksheets and structured reading lessons; however, both also utilized process writing and sustained silent reading.

How do teachers accommodate practices, beliefs, and the dictates of their school system?

As my research progressed, I had the opportunity to speak to members of the central office and discover that these "dictates" are assumptions and not expectations at the middle school level. All of the teachers in this study had never been told that they must use the basal or anything else. These participants were following the heuristics that were successful for them in their own classrooms.

Conclusion

Through this study I have witnessed teachers in transition, inspite of their years of experience. Explicitly through their words or actions or implicitly by what they did not say, participants were constantly in search of new ideas and better ways to teach. All teachers spoke freely of their life and experiences. A repeated comment was "I think this is the best way; it works for

me." None of the participants had been told that they had to teach any particular content. After speaking to a person from the central office, I was assured that what I considered dictates, were only assumptions and not expectations. These teachers were following the heuristics that were successful for them in their own classrooms.

Based on the information presented, teachers in all categories were middle school language arts teachers, who came from diverse backgrounds and who had a variety of educational training and experiences. Two of the participants had interrupted their teaching career for a number of years, causing anxiety today for having missed training in the new ideas that had come along during their absence. Each verbalized their feelings of a lack of expertise and their desire to learn from peers and others who could offer them insight.

Two of the participants were extremely open-minded and eager to grow professionally. They were also the participants with the greatest amount of educational credentials. These two exhibited a greater respect for the learner and each learner's individual differences.

Three participants continued to use the English text as a reference. Three of the participants continued to use the English texts as a guide to follow, feeling unsure about their ability to teach grammar in context from

student writing and reading. All of the participants discontinued the use of the basal except for certain selections, which they judged as appropriate for their class at a given time.

All participants used many holistic strategies; i.e., writing process, collaborative grouping, individualized reading to various degrees. All felt these strategies were a necessary part of language arts instruction.

No participant verbalized any theory or philosophy of the reading process. However, I did not initiate any such conversation. Dialogues of this type, between researcher and teacher, could possibly enlighten our knowledge of beliefs and how these beliefs influence practice.

In contrasts to Kinzer's study of 1988, the reader-based and text-based participants in this study were inconsistent with their beliefs and strategies. There existed a narrow gap between the interactive participants' beliefs and practices. Speculating, I may suggests that the inconsistencies may result from the instruments used to create the categories or from the inconsistency of giving different selections on any given day.

The inconsistencies in most participants may have been a result of considering these categories as neat and structured and ignoring that individuals are accommodate many factors to arrive at "the right way to teach" for themselves. We must consider the idea that perhaps the

categories that evolved from the beliefs stipulated in this study may not be synergistic, and that it is impossible to pair beliefs with practices for a population of teachers.

Recommendations for Future Research

I feel that the reading process is at the heart of instruction. However, it was not evident that the participants in this study were aware of the various processes of reading and their subsequent teaching styles. Further research to demonstrate this to preservice and inservice teachers may help to further empower teachers in their decision making in their preparation and teaching. Also, as O'Brien and Stewart (1990) suggests, research is needed to mesh the theories of learning advocated in the university setting with the practical realities of the school classroom.

A sensitivity created by the on-going research focused on these two beliefs; i.e., how reading is believed to develop and how it takes place may have future ramifications on teacher actions during classroom reading activities as well as subsequent inservices. This sensitivity could proffer future research possibilities "by educational theorists, researchers, policy makers, curriculum designers, teacher educators, and school administrators" (Clark and Peterson, 1986, p. 255). These events might stimulate other action research, working to solve specific problems in specific locations, to

investigate other gaps that exist between beliefs and actual classroom practices. For the goal of action research is "... to promote social change that is consistent with the advocates' belief" (Bogden and Biklen, 1992, p. 201).

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APPENDIX A

BELIEFS ABOUT HOW ONE READS (Leu & Kinzer, 1988)

1. Before children can comprehend, they must be able to recognize all of the words on a page.
2. Children's knowledge about the world plays a major role in their comprehension during reading.
3. Children who are weak at word recognition skills, usually cannot overcome this weakness with strengths at other levels of the comprehension process.
4. Before young children read about something, it is often useful for them to share an experience similar to that depicted in the text.
5. There is usually only one acceptable answer to a question from a story.
6. Teachers should normally give equal emphasis to instruction aimed at developing each knowledge source.
7. If children are weak in one knowledge source important to the comprehension process, it is still possible for them to read and comprehend.
8. The meaning of a text is usually a joint product of the reader and the text.
9. Teachers should normally expect and encourage children to have different interpretations to a story.
10. If a reader does not comprehend a text in the way an author intended, we can usually say they have misunderstood the text.
11. Teachers should normally inquire what children know about the topic of each story before they begin reading.
12. When children retell a story, they should usually attempt to use the author's words.
13. Expectations are often as important as accurate recognition of words during the reading process.
14. Readers use a variety of strategies as they read--from sounding out unfamiliar words to guessing familiar words in rich context.
15. The best readers are usually those who have learned to be accurate in their expectations for upcoming text.

APPENDIX B

BELIEFS ABOUT HOW READING ABILITY DEVELOPS (Leu & Kinzer, 1988)

1. It is important for teachers to provide very clear, precise presentations during reading instruction.
2. Children should receive many opportunities to read materials unrelated to specific school learning tasks.
3. In deciding how to teach reading, one should carefully consider the nature and abilities of the children.
4. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are closely related learning tasks.
5. Children learn to read best, when the task is broken down into specific skills to be taught by the teacher.
6. Children should be tested frequently to determine if they have learned what was taught. These tests should match very closely the nature of the instruction.
7. Some children learn to read best by reading widely and often; others learn best through direct instruction.
8. Children should be frequently read to, while they are young so they acquire a "feel" for what reading is like.
9. Opportunities should be created in the classroom to provide children with a reason to read.
10. Less proficient readers often benefit from more direct and structured learning experiences.
11. Teachers should have a list of separate reading skills appropriate for their grade level and make certain that each student masters these skills, and only these skills.
12. Much of what children learn about reading can be attributed directly to what a teacher taught in the classroom.
13. It is important to individualize reading instruction, as much as possible, by taking into consideration the children's reading abilities.
14. Children learn a great deal about reading by watching their parents at home.
15. A teacher should generally spend greater time in the classroom with less proficient readers than with more proficient readers.

APPENDIX C
INSTRUCTION WITHIN CATEGORIES

Reader-Based Implications for Instruction

- (1) Teacher models and guides instruction.
- (2) Students use prior knowledge to aid in understanding.
- (3) Students use a variety of materials, especially full-length literature and their own stories.
- (4) Students take part in group work, long readings, open-ended questions, and journal writing.
- (5) Evaluation is informal, giving emphasis to alternative assessment, subjective tests, and allowing multiple interpretations.
- (6) Teachers spend a great deal of time developing strategies for effective reading.
- (7) Teachers concentrate on organization and structure of reading material.
- (8) Teachers concentrate on syntactic and vocabulary knowledge.
- (9) Teachers concentrate on developing background knowledge to encourage accurate prediction of upcoming meaning.

Interactive Implications for Instruction

- (1) Teacher directs instruction, but plans for individual differences.
- (2) Student uses a variety of reading strategies to develop both text information and personal knowledge to arrive at meaning.
- (3) Students use a variety of reading materials including worksheets.
- (4) Students take part in a variety of activities including whole group and group activities, independent and teacher-assisted work, and authentic as well as worksheet activities.
- (5) Evaluation is both formal and informal, including objective and subjective testing, usually on literal and inferential levels.
- (6) Teacher gives equal attention to all components of comprehension:
 - (a) syntactic knowledge-word order rules
 - (b) decoding knowledge-determining oral equivalents of words
 - (c) vocabulary knowledge-developing specialized vocabulary
 - (d) discourse knowledge-structure in different types of writing
 - (e) readiness aspects-prepared to understand a particular selection

- (f) affective aspects-attitude and interests in reading
- (7) It is important to consider students' differing abilities when selecting and using text materials.
- (8) Teachers should spend more time working with less proficient readers, than with more proficient readers.

Text-Based Implications for Instruction

- (1) Teacher and the text is the authority, she/he directs the instruction and indicates the correctness of student response.
- (2) Student learns through isolated practice of individual skills with short, unrelated text.
- (3) Teachers should have a list of reading skills and make certain that students learn these skills.
- (4) Activities include short readings, skill drills, and independent work.
- (5) Evaluation is formal with objective tests requiring one correct answer. Students should be tested frequently to determine if they have mastered what the teacher has taught.
- (6) Basal and worksheet use is predominant.
- (7) Vocabulary receives emphasis to assist in decoding of text.
- (8) Reading is translation of author's intended message; therefore, there is one correct meaning accepted.
- (9) Emphasis on decoding of text and literal interpretations.

VITA

Shirley Theriot Fogleman was born on March 10, 1948, in St. Martinville, Louisiana. She is the daughter of Rita and Willis Theriot and the mother of two children, Rob and Erin Fogleman.

She is a graduate of St. Martinville High School, the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette, Louisiana, where she received a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Education. She completed all requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in the Spring Semester of 1995.

She has taught in the Louisiana Public School System for twenty-one years and at Louisiana State University for two years. Her experiences have ranged from the teaching of physical education and French at the high school level to French and language arts at the middle school level.


DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

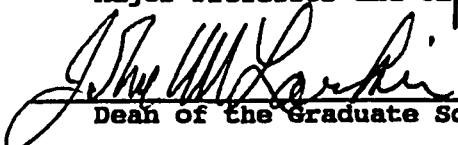
Candidate: Shirley Theriot Fogleman

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

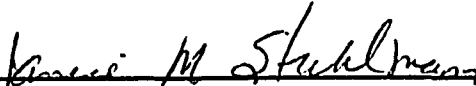
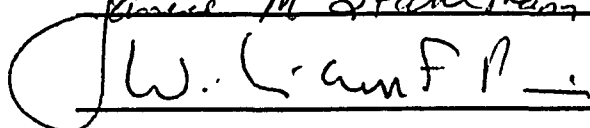
Title of Dissertation: A Cross-Case Analysis of Middle School Reading Teachers' Theoretical Orientations as They Relate to Classroom Practices

Approved:

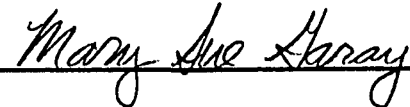

Major Professor and Chairman


Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:





Date of Examination:

April 3, 1995